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A COURSE  
OF  
LECTURES ON PAINTING,  
DELIVERED AT THE  
ROYAL ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS.

BY  
HENRY HOWARD, Esq., R.A.,  
SECRETARY AND TRUSTEE,  
AND PROFESSOR OF PAINTING TO THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

EDITED, WITH A MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR,

BY  
FRANK HOWARD,

*Author of the "Spirit of Shakespeare," the "Sketcher's Manual,"  
"Colour as a means of Art," the "Science of Drawing,"  
&c. &c. &c.*



L O N D O N :  
HENRY G. BOHN, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN.  
1848.

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**Printed by J. & H. COX (Brothers), 74 & 75, Great Queen Street,  
Lincoln's-Inn Fields.**

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## PREFACE BY THE EDITOR.

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IN conducting the following course of Lectures through the press, the latest corrections of the Author have been followed; but no alteration or modification of the text has been introduced: nor any annotations beyond occasional explanations of technical terms.

For the Memoir, the materials of the earlier portion have been furnished by a journal and account-books of the various periods referred to. The latter portion is supplied from the personal knowledge of those of his family by whom he was constantly surrounded. The notice has been strictly confined to Mr. Howard's professional career, and such circumstances as had any bearing upon it.

F. H.

*March 6, 1848.*





**MEMOIR**  
**OF**  
**HENRY HOWARD, R.A.,**  
**SECRETARY, TRUSTEE, AND PROFESSOR OF PAINTING**  
**TO THE**  
**ROYAL ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS,**  
**LONDON.**



# MEMOIR

OF

## HENRY HOWARD, R. A.

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HENRY HOWARD was born in London on the 31st of January, 1769, the year of the first exhibition of pictures at that Royal Academy in which he was destined afterwards to hold some of the most important offices, and to become one of the most distinguished members. At a school of no great celebrity, at Hounslow, he received a fair average education in the Roman and English classics, though he left it at the early age of thirteen years. After this he frequently accompanied his father to Paris: and during these excursions he soon became as conversant with French literature and the French language as with that of his own country. Here also he appears to have acquired a taste for the arts, which were not at that period intended as his profession, and to have received from his teacher of French \* some of his first ideas about drawing. He made acquaintance with a printseller, the father of Mr. John Thomas Smith, afterwards for so many years the keeper of the prints at the British Museum, author of the "Life of Nollekens," the "Topographical Antiquities

\* There are two drawings by this gentleman in the possession of the family of Mr. Howard. They are in red chalk, manifesting considerable ability, and are something in the style of Watteau.

of Westminster," &c., and from him the future artist borrowed Bartolozzi's engravings from the designs of Cipriani. These he copied with the greatest minuteness in red chalk on vellum. One of them has recently returned into the possession of the family, on the decease of the old friend, who had cherished this memento of years long gone by. It is an exquisite piece of manipulation, and a facsimile of Cipriani's drawing. The subject is "Juno coming to Jupiter adorned with the cestus of Venus."

At the age of seventeen, having manifested so decided a predilection for the fine arts, that his father felt it in vain to oppose it any longer, he was placed under the tuition of Philip Reinagle, R.A., one of the most versatile painters this country has produced or adopted, for though born in England his parents were German. His powers equally extended to all kinds of landscape and animal painting, and the most admirable imitation of nearly all the old masters, except the large historical painters. Half the Ruysdaels, Hobbimas, Wynants, &c., which are considered the gems of modern collections, are by Philip Reinagle. His sporting pictures are unrivalled. He had assisted Ramsay, who had then the commission of painting the royal portraits which are presented to the ambassadors, and he had shewn feeling for pathos in some illustrations of Sterne, some of which were sold at Christie's for Hogarth's, and fetched large prices: one is in the possession of Lord Northwick. He had an easy way of communicating his knowledge, and from his systematic method of painting, was admirably fitted to direct the studies of an artist who was desirous of becoming acquainted with the varied resources of art which are required for the illustration of poetry or history.

During the time the subject of our memoir was with Mr. Reinagle he was a very diligent reader of poetry, especially Milton, Pope, Spenser, and Shakspeare, having apparently inherited from his father a love for the latter poet.

On the 27th of March, 1788, Mr. Howard was admitted a student of the Royal Academy, and on the 10th of December, 1790, he obtained the first silver medal for the best drawing from the life. The same evening he also received the gold medal for the best original picture of a subject from Mason's dramatic poem, "Caractacus;" the point selected was from the last act, when Caractacus is brought in by the Romans a prisoner, recognizes the dead body of his son—

. . . . . "Is it thus ?

Then I'm indeed a captive."

This picture is now in the possession of Arthur Currie, Esq., of Cavendish-square, and is thus mentioned in a letter of introduction to Lord Hervey, the representative of the British government at Florence, given to Mr. Howard on his departure for the continent by Sir Joshua Reynolds, dated the 19th of March, 1791.

"He gained the first prize of our Academy in December last. I had the pleasure of telling him when I delivered the gold medal, that it was the opinion of the Academicians that his picture was the best that had been presented to the Academy ever since its establishment.

"To such merit I am assured that an introduction alone is sufficient to procure your lordship's favour."

The honour of obtaining the two principal medals on the same evening had never been achieved before that

time, and it has not occurred more than once or twice since.

Having carried his studies thus far in England, it was determined that he should visit Italy for the purpose of completing them, for which he prepared himself, by a diligent study of La Lande's "Voyage en Italie," and Grosley's Tour; and it appears, by a Journal in the possession of the family, that Mr. Howard "left London, March 21, 1791, at five in the morning, breakfasted at Rochester, dined at Canterbury, and slept at Dover; crossed the water on the 22nd, and after a passage of three hours and a half arrived at Calais; lodged at Grandsires; in the evening went to the Comédie (not remarkable for any thing but the frontispiece or curtain being dedicated to the six heroes of Calais, who surrendered themselves to save their fellow-citizens from the rage of Edward III.): left this place at three in the morning, breakfasted at Boulogne, dined at Montreuil, and supped at Abbeville; slept there a few hours; continued our route, dined at Amiens. The cathedral, a very fine specimen of the Gothic, and well worth seeing; the principal gate remarkably grand and striking; a figure within of a boy weeping, which they praise infinitely more than it deserves, and tell of the English offering a very large sum for; the expression in the head is good, but perhaps rather too great (strong), not the refined expression of the antique, but the blubbing of an ordinary child, though I suppose it is intended for a cherub. March 24. Supped at Clermont; passed Chantilly (25th) early in the morning (a beautiful spot, which the absence of the owner has almost destroyed); passed St. Denis, and arrived at Paris about noon."

He had two agreeable companions, an English lady and an American gentleman, of whom he remarks :— “ If he is to be considered as an example of his countrymen, they are worthy of the greatest admiration,—replete with humanity, intelligence, and observation : nothing in the least deserving notice escaped his inquiring curiosity ; to his accounts of his native country, the enthusiasm of a man who had fought in the cause of freedom gave an ardour that excited much interest, but no doubt in the hearer,—it was so at least as to myself,—in short, he was the fittest to make an agreeable and useful companion in a journey that ever I met with, and a most desirable acquaintance for any man who had leisure to become known to him (brother to Boyd, the banker). The rest of my fellow-travellers, but for their noise and crowding the diligence I should not have observed at all, but that was an impossibility ; their discourse throughout the journey from Calais ran on the Revolution, of which, had they been to be believed, they all knew the secret springs : the natural elocution of Frenchmen never had a finer topic. Between Calais and Paris I met with nothing but *stanch* patriots ; the name of aristocrat was never uttered but with detestation. The conductor of the diligence from Calais was an impudent, daring, clever fellow, who had seized at different frontiers large sums of money (leaving the kingdom), and shewed us a memoir he had written on the subject, for the purpose of presenting to the National Assembly,—his name, Vivien,—his services had procured him the advantage of going to any part of the kingdom (in the diligence) free of expense,—his manner of inviting the travellers to descend (which he always did a little after dinner) was rather extraordinary



to English ears (at least to those who did not recollect Sterne's anecdote of Madame de Rambouliet), and would have been more disagreeable, had not our female companion been accustomed a little to it by having lived some time in France; his question, however, was so very abrupt, as to wound the feelings of the American and myself; our delicacy was hurt for the lady, who fortunately had sense or courage enough to laugh it off; this trait of French manners, if it does not give occasion to call their politeness in question, shews it to be rather less delicate than that of the English."

On the evening of the 25th, a few hours after his arrival at Paris, he went to the Italian Theatre (*les Droits du Seigneur*), "the piece light and trivial as usual. The actors possess a warmth and *naïveté* which, it must be confessed, is scarcely known in England; and this accounts for even the insignificance of their pieces being seldom disgusting, and the want of music in their songs being endurable; in the contrivance of decoration and the *jeu de Théâtre* they excel us, but the painting and illusion of our *scenes* (understood literally, *i. e.* in the confined sense of the word) are infinitely superior. The French singers, men and women, have, generally speaking, more taste than ours—they are more on a par likewise—few of them have much voice, and those, as with us, are often the worst singers. The *Spectacle* is more striking than the English, more ornamented, more brilliant; in short, is only what might be expected from the difference of character in the nations,—the one more gay, the other more solid."

He proceeds to notice some of the works of art; and of all the "squares or rather places of Paris," he gives the palm to "the Place de Vendome, both for the archi-

ture and an equestrian figure in bronze of Louis XIV., by Girardon, which is beyond compare the finest I have ever seen at this time." Under the date of the 27th, he observes, "The next is the Place de Victoires, of which likewise the architecture is regular and beautiful; in the centre is a fine groupe of an angel crowning 'the immortal man,' who is trampling on a Cerberus; the zeal for liberty, since the Revolution, has extended even to the freeing, or at least removing, four slaves in bronze, which were chained to the corners of the pedestal, and were much the finer part of the work, some of the very best things of the kind in Paris." On this groupe, he further remarks, "The attitude is good and rather dignified, but the immense perruque on the top of a Roman figure is rather revolting. The angel has much beauty, particularly in the head; critics of some sort have remarked, that she seems as much to be taking off the crown or more, than putting it on. I rather conceive this to be an unavoidable effect of similar actions, which being momentary, must, when imitated by art, always leave a small degree of uncertainty; at least the works of the greatest artists have not escaped the same criticism in parallel cases."

He proceeds: "Place Louis Quinze has two ranges of building (forming one side of a square, opposite to the river, and a new bridge), which are exceedingly elegant. In the centre is a figure of Louis XV., by Bouchardon; the man, the horse, and four Virtues which support the base, are, in my opinion, very indifferent (the Virtues from the designs of Pigal). The Tuileries are pleasant gardens, and contain some very fine pieces of sculpture, particularly a 'Lucretia' (otherwise 'Poetus and Arria,') by Le Pautre, and an 'Odoacer,' said by

M. de la Roche to be 'Annibal counting the rings of the Roman knights slain at the battle of Cannæ;' to me this appears unfounded,—it is by Stodz. The château is a noble building, and connects with the Louvre, which extends nearly half a mile in length, looking on the river, and is a unique monument of magnificence and grandeur. The bridges are undeserving of a remark, excepting that on the Pont Neuf is a very fine figure of Henri IV., which drew an enthusiastic admiration from my American, both for the subject and execution. It is rather odd that the National Assembly has permitted four slaves, which are at the corners of this pedestal, to remain,—at once a mark of their injustice and want of taste,—these being as bad as those of the Place des Victoires were excellent. The figures of Henri IV. and his horse are by different hands; the first is universally admired, and deservedly; the latter is perhaps rather too large, but I am inclined to think very good; it is by John de Bologna. The College of Mazarin I think a beautiful building, notwithstanding the different opinion of M. de la Roche, who calls it unworthy of notice. Notre Dame is a fine Gothic church, and contains many good pictures; the tomb of Count d'Harcourt, though much vaunted, is very bad. St. Sulpice,—a fine portico and two beautiful towers. St. Génévieve is an immense pile, which has been a number of years building, and is the boast of all the Parisians; but the dome appears less elegant in its proportions than either Val du Grace or the Invalides. The dome is striped red and black, and looks not unlike part of a balloon; if it is meant for ornament, I think they are deceived."

On the 30th of March, he "left Paris at eleven at

night, in a carriage misnamed a diligence, fortunately had only one companion, and he silent enough to pass for an Englishman. 31st. Dined at Joigny (on the Seine), where we found the peasants feasting and dancing on the bridge, for joy of the gates being that day thrown open for the free admission of every thing, and the *commis* dismissed—a regulation taking place in all inland towns, and one happy consequence of the Revolution. In the evening arrived at Sens, a considerable town, and an archbishopric; the cathedral worth seeing. A large monument to the dauphin and his spouse (by Couston, jun.), has some merit. So ill-contrived are the public carriages (or rather conducted), that we arrived here at five in the evening, and remained till five next morning, which time would have been better filled up at Paris. Met here (a passenger in the Lyons diligence) the most beautiful woman I saw in France, who supped with us at *table d'hôte*. The easy gaiety of this lady, and the vivacity of a troop of Frenchmen who arrived with her, were of great use in shaking off the drowsiness acquired by travelling all day at four or five miles an hour, especially as my companion was not of the noisy kind. Next night, April 1, slept at Florentine, a small town situated on an eminence; here we wasted as many hours as the day before, and more unpleasantly, as there was *nothing* to be seen, and no pretty woman to sup with."

At Lyons, where he arrived on the 6th, he observes, "The Place de Belcour is very magnificent, and has a good equestrian statue of Louis XIV. by Coisevox. On the sides of the pedestal are two figures of the Saone and the Rhone, both very bad. The Hôtel de Ville is a fine building. 7th. Walked about the city,

but from want of knowing what to look for, I find since, missed those things chiefly worth seeing—the confluence of the Rhone and the Saone.” On the 11th he arrived at Geneva, without finding any thing worthy of mention, beyond the dilatory *sang-froid* of the conductors, and the filth of the voitures, and the grandeur and novelty of the road, which “made a great impression on me, and must on any one unacquainted with the Alps.”

After a few general and unimportant observations on the general character of the town, he says, “The buildings are not remarkable for their beauty; the new portico of St. Peter’s is in a good style, and the only thing of the kind. The cathedral itself is very ancient; said to be built by one of the Dukes of Burgundy; it is Gothic, but not purely so. Here is a monument to the Duc de Rohan, which Grosley calls fine, but why I cannot guess—unless because it is made of *Italian marble*.”

He remained at Geneva with his parents, who at that period were residing there, until the 14th of July, when he resumes his Journal. “Left Geneva at half-past five in the morning; a pleasant country to Frangy, where dined ill enough. Disagreeable weather, and barren country to Rumilly—a little village as well as Frangy; where supped wretchedly, and slept as ill. 15th. Leave it at five o’clock. The country extremely romantic—vast rocks, torrents springing from them, and passing under several stone bridges; rather desolate, and thin of houses. Dined at Chambery, the capital of Savoy, a considerable town, tolerably built—seems populous; roads remarkably good, and abounding with fine points of view, in the romantic style; something now and

then of Salvator Rosa. The country to Chamberry remarkable. Road pleasant to Montmelian, where we slept. A bridge over the Isère, formed of the stones of the famous citadel taken by Sully: the ruins still remain on an isolated rock. Bad inn. 16th. Walked part of the way. Delightful country; road perfectly good and pleasant; infinite number of walnut-trees; fine points of view; mountains cultivated to a height that astonishes; the hills gradually increase in height; chiefly covered with a profusion of trees. In a very singular and beautiful situation, stands Aiguabelle; a good inn where we dined; the road—as delightful as ever painting attempted to express—for two or three miles) becomes by degrees more rocky; enter into Mar-nienne, a valley, in which lies the Isère; the hills tremendous; and torrents, running in a number of places, swell the river. Excellent road, often cut out of the solid rock for a considerable depth; valley becoming narrower; numbers of goîtres (chiefly beggars here). Houses planted in odd and desolate situations on the mountains, sometimes hid by long tracts of clouds lying upon them, even in the heat of a strong sun, when the day is as clear as possible; fine effects of light and shade; tops of the mountains still covered with snow, and hid in the clouds; numbers of ruined forts; slept at La Chambre—bad accommodation, and an impertinent landlady. 17th. Quit at five o'clock; valley becomes narrower; cross the Isère repeatedly, on wooden bridges; dine at St. Michele, a neat house and tolerably good; up and down hill continually; reach Modene, where slept—miserably accommodated. 18th. Quit at four o'clock; bad roads to Lanebourg, where fared indifferently; ascended Mount Cenis upon a mule; the road by

no means so bad as generally described. The passage of Mount Cenis, at least at this season of the year, is far from being dangerous. The precipices I had read of I looked for in vain ; nor is it to be compared, for terror, to Mount Credo. The road is wide enough for three chairs to go abreast, if they did not prefer following one another, in order to pick their way. The lake, in the midst of a plain, on the top, an agreeable object ; alighted at the Grande Croix, a little inn, from whence descended the mountain in a chair carried by two men, with astonishing rapidity considering the badness of the road, which is bare rock ; a great number of very fine cascades, some perfectly picturesque ; *porteurs* rest four or five times ; half-way stay a few minutes to drink ; reach at length Novalesse—the Piedmontese character displays itself immediately,—insolent and rapacious ; impossible to satisfy the *porteurs* ; the landlord very polite and uncivil ; dispute in vain with his phlegm ; patience the only remedy.”

“ 19th. Quit at four o'clock ; pass Susa, the key of Italy ; apparently very strong by nature and art ; country fertile, but continues mountainous to Rivoli, from whence a remarkably fine avenue (having the Superga for a terminating point) conducts straight to Turin ; lodge at the Hôtel de Provence,—noisy situation, but good house. 20th. The inhabitants alone can understand one another, generally speaking—make use of neither French nor Italian, but a jargon of their own. The finest piece of architecture in the town is the front of the Palais du Prince de Piedmont. The chapel of St. Suevi, joining to the cathedral, is very magnificent,—has a communication with the king's palace. In the library, through the information of M. Visca (Peintre

en miniature du Roi nella contrada di Po—an artist of great intelligence and invention, and a man of real politeness; he treated me with a civility it was impossible for me to expect from a slight introduction like mine), find a little book of sketches, by Giulio Romano, full of fire and spirit. The king's collection contains some good pictures; particularly three children of Charles I. by Vandyke, one of the finest I ever saw; well contrived chiaroscuro, simple and elegant; beauty of the portraits wonderful, equal at least—but I am inclined to think superior—to those pictures of the same children in Buckingham House (the Duke of York is wanting, which not being the pleasing figure in the others, I did not care to miss); a 'St. John,' of Guido, two or three Teniers, several Wouvermans, a Gerard Douw (wonderful, but not pleasing to an artist), a 'Prodigal Son' of Guercino, a 'Salutation' of Simon Vouet, a Paul Potter, &c. &c. The 'Four Elements,' of Albani, I think more praised than they deserve; the figures, in general, are very good, but so scattered, that the eye wants a resting-place. The archives of the king kept in admirable order; a fine drawing of Michael Angelo, and a finer of Correggio (or some one else), grace itself." The only things which he missed, of those he desired to see, were the arsenal and the church of the Superga.

"24th July. Leave Turin, with an agreeable young Englishman, Mr. Thomas Ackland; dine at Cighane, arrive in the evening at Vercelli, a considerable town, well built, and populous; indifferent inn. 25th. Quits at four o'clock, pass Novare, a small fortified town, and Ruffalora, a considerable village, and frontier of the king's (Sardinia's) dominions; reach Milan in the evening, and put up at the Pozzo, or Well, a good inn, but



extremely dear. 26th. Milan, notwithstanding its reputation for gaiety, and a portion of the French ease and vivacity, appears, in comparison with Turin, heavy and dull; the cathedral is an immense mass of marble unfinished, the height of the steeple is very great, and commands a view of the whole plain of Lombardy, which is fruitful to a surprising degree; its luxuriance is even tiresome, the inclosures on every side blocking up the view entirely, and confining you to a garden."

"The archbishop's palace contains some pictures of first-rate merit, a 'Madonna and Child' by Leonardo da Vinci, the head of Mary only finished, but is a model of angelic sweetness and composure. I am not clear if it is not finer than that of Correggio, at Parma—more divine. Oh! ye painters of latter days, how have ye fallen off! Some fine pictures by Titian; a beautiful 'Christ in the arms of St. Joseph,' by Guido; and another 'Christ,' by Luca; four charming pictures of Vernet; several very good of Pannini, and some of Bassan. Bibliotheca Ambrosiana, and Museum Settala. Raphael's cartoon for the 'School of Athens,' most admirable; some figures are wanting, which he afterwards introduced in the picture. A 'St. John,' painted by Bernardo Luino, but I should think from Leonardo; and a 'Madonna,' by Leonardo, which are the *ne plus ultra* of beautiful expression, and leave the works of almost all other painters very far behind them. Several excellent pictures of Bernardo Luino, his scholar, who seems to have caught a ray of inspiration from his master; some very fine Titians. Leonardo's famous picture of the 'Last Supper,' in the refectory of the convent of Dominicans, possesses many excellent things; the six

fingers said to be on the hand of one of the apostles is very doubtful. Writers quarrel with regard to the figure; one on the right hand of Jesus Christ is pointed out by the monks, but I could perceive only five fingers; it is true that the hand is wide enough between the fourth and fifth finger to admit of another. The picture I should conceive not to have been entirely repainted, but retouched. It deserves all that has been or may be said of it; the composition is admirable, and impresses the subject at the first glance; the attitude, with the exception of one or two, very fine and expressive, and the characters *great*. It is the foundation, the groundwork of all the Cœnæ Domini since his time, as the Iliad is the model of all the epic poems which have been written since Homer."

"Two fine statues ('Adam and Eve,' by Artaldo di Lorenzo) ornament the front of a church (Madonna di S. Celso), which is decorated with bronze chapiters to all the columns; an infinite variety of marbles of great beauty are to be found in almost all. The remains of a Roman colonnade (of the Corinthian order), near the church of S. Lorenzo, is worthy of notice for its fine proportion. In the church of La Vittoria, a good picture of Salvator Rosa.

"College di Brera, a fine building; the Abbé Bianconi has a large and excellent collection of prints, and some good pictures; one of Mantegna, in a frame ornamented with the finest carved-work I *ever* saw. The artist requires for it 1,000 sequins.

"The theatre is large and neat, a tolerable company of Italian comedians, not much attended; unfortunately, arrived on the same night the opera finished.

"Saw a fine church, with a tolerable picture, much

cried up, of Pompeo Battoni; a fine cupola, but disfigured by the quantity of paintings on it.

" 28th. Left Milan at four o'clock. Roads excellent (except about eight miles of deep sand). Marignano, a neat little town. Placentia, situated near the Po, which is here a wide and beautiful river. Cross in a commodious bark. Officers of the Dogana troublesome. 29th. The cathedral, a despicable old building, contains some fine pictures, but very dark, of Ludovico Carracci. The cupola, painted by Guercino, did not strike me as very fine. In a chapel, on the right hand, is a good picture of the 'Father and the Virgin Mary' surrounded by angels, in general well drawn, and contains some good positions of boys. St. Agostino, a very pretty church, in good style of architecture, by Vignola. Madonna di Campagna; some good pictures, one is very like Parmeggiano; the two celebrated bronze statues of Alexander and Ranuce Farnese did not answer the conception I had formed of them; the first, in particular, is excessively fluttering, the mane and tail too much made out. The figures have no dignity; though well-draped, are ill drawn; chief merit appears to me to be the motion of the horses, which is happily caught; they are seen to disadvantage from the lowness of the pedestals. In the evening proceeded to Fiosenzola, where supped, and reposed an hour, and continued our route; arrived at Parma about ten o'clock on the 30th of July.

" Parma is pleasantly situated about two leagues from the Apennines, surrounded with fortifications and a citadel, extensive. On the river Parma, over which are several long bridges, and at present not a drop of water. The picture of Correggio at the Academy, the

principal thing worth seeing here. The Madonna has a smile truly divine; the Magdalen exceedingly fine; the composition admirable. The only objections I can make are, that the Christ wants a little more dignity, and the angel attendant still more; this I dislike most in the piece; the countenance is even apish, if I see right, and the right leg of St. Jerome appears to be a little more extended than ease and nature would prompt, though it may make a more graceful line to the eye of a painter: perhaps it may be meant to be foreshortened; if so, it is ill done; but, at any rate, the leg of the Madonna appears too short. I see nothing exceptionable in the head of St. Jerome; the Christ has much of Parmeggiano in the head, the arm of St. Jerome meagre and not correctly drawn, the hand of the angel on the book rather too *clawy*. There is no effect of writing where it points; the little angel in the corner, with a cup, has a good deal of character, but not very angelic. Mary Magdalen is represented of the same age that she generally is when anointing the feet of our Saviour, thirty years after. I do not agree with the Abbé Goujenot (and as he says with all true connoisseurs) that it would be improved if formed into an oval. The posture of the Magdalen would be tiresome were any one to remain in it long, but is natural, and not liable to M. Goujenot's objection; the bank advancing to the right makes her situation with respect to the Christ perfectly possible; the admired smile of the Virgin is made by drawing up one corner of the mouth only, and that a little lengthened; the cheek too is a little raised, which occasions the shadow under the lower eyelid to be rather stronger on that side the face, which he has judiciously chosen to be the dark one; five or six yards or more

from the picture seems to be the best place for viewing it,—the characters and situation of the figures are seen to more advantage; the lion, near St. Jerome, is rather small, but is of great use in the composition.”

“Am just come from the theatre—a very comical performance of *Samson*, in which are introduced Harlequin, Columbine, Pantaloon, &c. His combat with the lion was highly laughable, and I left in the middle of the slaughter of the Philistines; the stage pretty nearly covered. He was a very stout man, and suited well enough the character, as a pretty little woman did that of Columbine. Harlequin was old, but full of tricks irresistibly droll. Samson’s servant I know not the name of, but was a kind of brother to Harlequin. It seemed to take very much.”

“The Academy of Painting is under the immediate patronage and even inspection of the Infant, and is ruled by very strict laws,—a few instances of neglecting to attend brings on expulsion; and ill-behaviour, banishment from the city. Gold medals are given away every year (of five ounces weight) for the best picture, piece of sculpture, and architectural design, for which foreigners may try, and are not even obliged to attend to receive the prize in case they should be successful, which seems extremely liberal; but it must be remarked, they detain the work, which (particularly the picture) must be very middling if not worth more than 25 guineas. However, those specimens already in the rooms were certainly sufficiently paid. Here is a good picture of Schidone, and one of a Frenchman, ‘Virginia before Appius,’ has a great deal of merit. The great room is pretty, and lined with statues, some antique, dug out from Velleii, of which one is a fine study of drapery.

"The cupola of the Cathedral, by Correggio, which is said to have cost him his life (*vide* Grosley), I looked at with reverence on that account ; but the place is obscure, and the figures small ; this I could only perceive, the foreshortenings of most of them to be extremely good. His 'Sta. Madonna della Scodella' has much beauty, but the figures are too short ; some angels flying at the top of the picture are very clever. 'Madonna della Scala' is only a sketch in fresco, nothing astonishing. In the Annonciata, a very fine church, is a beautiful fresco, by him, of the 'Annunciation,' though, unfortunately, almost obliterated ; the attitude, character, and expression of Mary are equal to any thing I have seen." This appears to be the head referred to above in his observations on a "Madonna," by Leonardo, which have evidently been added, at a subsequent period, to his first remark on the picture.

"St. Antonio, a pretty church—rather theatrical, has a picture of Battoni, very defective ; one opposite to it, a 'Holy Family,' in its flight crossing a ford ; an angel (too much like a Cupid) is holding steady the planks—(a pretty idea). Joseph, in the water, is offering to take the child ; and Mary is advancing forward. The picture is well conceived, drawn, and coloured, but wants a little dignity, particularly the Joseph.

"In the Steccata, the finest church here, are several paintings of Parmeggiano, particularly the famous 'Moses.' They are all against the arches, &c. of roofs, and, of course, seen to ill advantage.

"August 2nd. Arrived at Modena. The duke's palace contains every thing deserving of notice in this city, where I staid but a few hours. The building has something grand in its appearance, though the architecture is

not fine (by Avanzari). It contains a very fine collection of pictures; one of the most famous is 'The Woman taken in Adultery;' the colouring is beautiful, the composition too much like a collection of portraits; some of which are fine characters, but the head of Christ is very mean, and the woman not handsome. A very fine 'Presentation in the Temple,' believe of Guido; a good copy of Correggio's famous 'Notte;' three pictures of Giulio Romano, and some very capital of the Carracci, Guido, and Guercino; there is likewise a capital collection of drawings. The gallery is filled with every thing that is curious; a very animated bust of Francis the First, duke of Modena, by Bernini; the drapery is rather fluttering,"—to this, at some later period, he has appended,—“but wonderfully light and beautiful.”

“Travelled all night, and arrived at Bologna on the 3rd of August. The weather excessively hot, more so than has been felt here for many years (some say thirty, and some five). La Lande, which is odd, mentions the church of St. Gregorio without taking notice of a fine picture of Lo. Carracci, a head of whom, in the same place, I wished to copy for Sir J. Reynolds. 4th. Meet with an English artist of the name of Frearson; accompanies me to the Palace Sampieri, where is a collection of pictures; some remarkably grand, of Annibal Carracci, Lodovico, Agostino, and Guercino, in fresco, on the ceilings; that of the latter, I conceive the best, is inimitably foreshortened, and of greater force than the rest. The most celebrated picture here is that of 'Peter reproved by Paul,' of Guido, which is extremely fine in all respects—the heads, hands, leg, and drapery are all fine, and the tone much deeper and stronger than that of Guido in general.” To this he has added at a subse-

quent period: “ ‘ Jesus, with the Woman of Samaria at the Well,’ is full of fine figures, by Annibal. A picture of Lodovico, of ‘ The Canaanite,’ is likewise beautiful. Agostino strikes me as the worst painter of the three. Here is a picture by Guercino (which wants tone, and I am almost persuaded is a copy); the head of Agar is wonderfully beautiful and expressive. Here is a sweet composition of Albano, and a fine sketch of Rubens, a head only, and is said to be ‘ Peter weeping.’ Guido’s is generally called ‘ Peter weeping.’ Drops of water are visible on his cheek, but I do not think he weeps. The hand of St. Paul is not expressive, and, besides, is cramped; and perhaps a *little* light on the trees in the background would improve the effect of chiaroscuro; the edge of the drapery over the knee of Peter makes an unpleasant line. On the whole I cannot help thinking this picture is overrated. 5th. The Zambeccari collection is likewise filled with very fine pictures, chiefly of the Bolognese school. Church of the Mendicanti is remarkable for several; a Guido (in his first manner), over the altar, possesses very great merits; and a ‘ Job,’ on the left hand, restored to riches, is in every respect a delightful piece. The characters are all beautiful, colouring exquisite, and composition very fine, excepting three figures behind, whose actions are rather too similar. A very fine-marked head of L. Carracci; a beautiful ‘ St. Sebastian,’ of Titian; ‘ Moses breaking the Commandments’—a very grand figure; and the ‘ Joshua,’ a very pretty one. A ‘ Peter denying Christ’ has infinite merit in the ideas. I do not know the author. Reviewing this ‘ Job,’ I found it weak in all respects. Here is a fine picture of Lodovico Carracci, in a chapel on the right hand. 6th. Church of St. Dominico has a fine picture of ‘ The Slaughter of the Innocents,’ by



Guido; the colouring and style of painting exquisite; the composition good, but the expression appears to me feeble. There is a ceiling in fresco, by the same master, in a large chapel, on the right hand, which has great merit. This is a very fine church. St. Petronio is the largest in Bologna, famous for being the place where Charles V. was crowned (which, however, is disputed), and for possessing one of the finest meridians existing—made by Cassini.

“ 7th. The church of St. Peter, which is the cathedral, is large, the architecture in a good style, and some of the chapels as fine as any I have seen, and built with variety of rich marbles. An ‘Annunciation,’ in fresco, of Lod. Carracci, has merits; and there are some passable pictures, of the description I always wish to pass by.

“ 8th. The figure of ‘Neptune,’ by John de Bologna, in the Market-place, has great merit, though in a style which is too much mannered, *i. e.* the anatomy marked everywhere with a greater degree of affectation than truth, not being proportioned to the action of the limbs. The leg on which he stands appears larger than the other. The attitude is good. The four boys on the corners of the pedestal are execrable; the nymphs below are good, but in attitudes rather too voluptuous.

“ 9th. Saw a good collection of prints at the Marq. Spada’s, and a very fine collection of drawings by Parmeggianini, at the Count Tuoni’s, a very polite nobleman of this place. A set of pictures at the Ranuzzi Palace, which in general are execrable; a fine picture, notwithstanding, of Paul Veronese, ‘St. Catherine;’ a picture of Vandyke, a portrait, and one of Ann. Carracci, ‘The Canaanite at the feet of Christ.’

“ 10th. St. John in Monte, has a very fine picture

of Perugino, which shews that Raffaello did not invent all the beautiful characters we find in his works; they are to be traced, though in a more imperfect state, in those of his master; in this there is much grace. The very famous picture of 'St. Cecilia,' by Raffaello, did not entirely answer the expectation I had formed of it from various writers. The composition is simple and well; the figures in good attitudes, but seem in general too short, except the female on the right; they want, in my opinion, a little of the elegance of Parmeggiano." To this he has added at a subsequent period, or "rather of the antique." "The characters too are not equal to some of his; an old head behind, with a crozier, is even mean; in short, I cannot think it worthy to rank with the Correggio at Parma. There is a picture of Domenichino, which has fine parts, but the composition is strangely scattered, and the chiaroscuro too. A picture of Guercino had some good heads."

"11th. At St. Agnese is a picture of Domenichino, which possesses great merit. The colouring of the background is extremely cold, and the upper part of the composition a confused cluster of figures; the lower part is better composed, and the chiaroscuro good."

"12th. St. Michele, in Bosco, situated on the top of a pleasant hill close to the town, from whence is an extensive view of Lombardy. There is an inner octagon court or cloister, the walls of which are covered with pictures, now almost obliterated; the remains of one very fine by Agostino Carracci are still visible, and one of Guido, which must have been uncommonly beautiful. This latter, I should think not irrecoverable, if a skilful artist were employed; and if it could be done, would shew Guido to as much advantage as any

picture I have seen of him. A picture here, in some part of the convent, of 'Peter's Vision of Unclean Beasts,' which he is ordered to kill and eat; poor. 'St. Paul' over the altar, a groupe by Algardi; the martyrdom of St. Paul, which has merit, but the saint is deficient in dignity of character, and the executioner in expression or animation—too much made out to be grand."

"13th. Certosa, a monastery of Carthusians, about a mile and a half from the town, which is a model for neatness and comfort. The church contains some fine pictures; one of 'St. John Preaching in the Wilderness,' by Lodovico Carracci, has infinite merit; the heads of St. John and several others are beautiful; it is in composition, colouring, and effect, much out of his usual mode, *i. e.* more in the Venetian manner, but very fine. Two pictures of the 'Scourging, &c. of our Saviour' are very grandly composed; almost effaced. A fine picture, of Agostino, of 'St. Jerome receiving the Wafer;' some of the heads are excellent, but the tone of colour in general grey and feeble. Domenichino's famous picture at Rome of the same subject is little more than a copy of this." The last sentence has evidently been added after he had reached Rome. "Here is a pretty"—corrected into "fine—picture of Guercino, a ditto of Sirani, Jessi, &c."

"14th. Saw, at Count Zambeccari's, a small picture of Guido from Ann. Carracci, 'St. Roch distributing of Alms,' one of the finest compositions I ever saw, and full of the most capital figures: there is an etching of this, which is scarce; the original said to be at Dresden, but almost destroyed. N.B. I remember to have seen a small copy, probably done from this, of Guido, being

the same size as Sir Abraham Hume's, which he calls a sketch by Ann. Carracci."

"15th. Church of St. Salvator is a pretty piece of architecture internally, and, I am told, has some fine pictures, but, the church undergoing repair, they were covered up."

"30th. Copy a head of Rubens at the Zampieri gallery."

"31st. Made a little sketch of Andromeda."

"Sept. 1st. St. Pietro Martire; a very fine picture, of Ludovico Carracci, of 'The Transfiguration,'—one of the best I have seen of this school; the Christ has much beauty, the figures in the foreground are very grand, and the draperies throughout in a very fine style. A picture of Tintoretto here,—'The Meeting of Mary and Elizabeth,' I could find nothing to admire in. A little church is near this, with a pretty cupola, called 'La Madonna della Barracano.'"

"2nd. Walked in an hour to S. Lucca, situated on a very high hill, about a league from Bologna; the architecture is very pretty, but the wonderful picture of the 'Madonna' a joke almost more than I could digest. All but the heads (which were of a dark brown colour) are covered with jewels. The picture is unlocked with great form and ceremony (after a prayer being said to it), and the people say their prayers to it before they dare to examine it."

"5th. Went to the Instituta, the finest collection of remarkable things I ever saw. The anatomical imitations in wax, by Ercole Lelli, are admirable, and of the highest use to an artist. . . . The copies of the antiques, in the gallery of statues, seem most excellent: among the antiques themselves are several bits of fine

sculpture and an Isiac table. Most of the rooms contain models by the students of the Clementine Academy—none very fine. In one room is a ceiling painted by Pellegrino Tibaldi; some of the figures are in the boldest and most admirable attitudes; here is a picture of Philoctetes by Barry (very bad), several prize drawings of the students, some of which are very good.”

“6th. Quit Bologna under the *care* of the Procaccio, who troubled not his head about us; was recommended to go with him in preference to a voiture.”

“9th. Arrived at Florence about nine in the morning. This road from Bologna to Florence is across the whole width of the Apennines; you are continually ascending and descending,—one might almost suppose they had purposely conducted the road over the tops of the hills, instead of endeavouring to find a passage between them. The country reminds one of Savoy (on a smaller scale), but wears rather a more sterile appearance, and is not so romantic, though in some parts pretty much so. At Pietra Mala, the officers of the grand-duke examine the baggage; but, though hindered a considerable time from going on, I had not enough to visit the Fuoco di Ligno. Florence is discovered at some distance, surrounded with innumerable seats and villages, thickly spread for a great extent, and invites the traveller with bewitching graces and riches. You lose sight of it soon, and do not see it again till you approach very near. The suburbs (those pleasant additions to a city, which give you an idea of comforts in the people) are very long; you enter by the Porto Gallo, close to which stands a fine triumphal arch, erected to Francis: it is rather too crowded with ornaments.”

He arrived on the day of a great “Festa, la Nun-

giata, which made the whole city alive, and brought in great numbers of the peasants dressed in all finery." Heard a grand performance of music before the grand-duke in the church of L'Annunciata; "it was not remarkably fine;" and walked over "the Cascino, a delightful sort of park, a little out of the town by the side of the Arno, containing a small palace, where the grand-duke refreshes himself when hunting (and at other times). The grounds are prettily laid out, without the least appearance of art, and contain a great plenty of all kinds of game. It is the only thing of the kind I have met with in Italy, and resembles extremely an English gentleman's park, being interspersed with meadows," &c. Here he met the grand-duke and duchess, but he makes no remark upon them; but he observes, "The gaiety of Florence, which had at this time, and in general has, a great number of foreigners; *the superior beauty of the women*, and their taste in dress, give a stranger just arrived from Bologna the most pleasant contrast possible." But to the passage he has Italicized he subsequently appended a note: "By the bye, was perhaps a little dazzled the first day, and during my stay in Florence was induced to alter my opinion on this head."

He remained two months in Florence, making sketches and observations on every thing that appeared to him worthy of notice. He remarks upon "the cathedral, which is an immense and fine building; the outside of which is inlaid with different-coloured marbles, giving it the appearance of a Chinese cabinet;" that "the inside is not answerably decorated. The pavement is mosaic, and of an ingenious design; against the wall are busts of Brunelleschi, the architect,

Giotto (to whose epitaph, by the alteration of one word, La Lande has given a strange turn : ‘*Quam recte manus tam fuit et facilis,*’ La Lande has made ‘*facies,*’ making the painter praise his *beauty* instead of his *facility* of handling), and others. The choir is ornamented with bas-reliefs of single figures, some of which are really admirable. The groupe of Bandinelli, over the altar, I do not like at all ; the Christ is the least bad. I am told the statues of Adam and Eve at the old palace, formed originally a part of this groupe, and the idea of the sculptor was to represent Sin, Redemption, and Pardon. Behind this is a sketch of Michael Angelo, which is, I think, a good deal exaggerated. The statues of all the Apostles are very indifferent, and the Evangelists of Donatello too. There is a good figure of St. Podius, and another, which has a good head, of St. Zenobius : the dome is of very large dimensions and fine proportion, but being angular, loses a beauty, I think, which circles have. It is covered with paintings, which are so high and so obscure, as to prevent criticism. The Tower of Giotto, which stands near the cathedral, is very light and pretty, inlaid with different-coloured marbles, as is the Baptistery, a church in the same place, of an octangular figure, where all the christenings of the city are performed. Over the doors are some bronze statues of Donatello, which have merit for the age they were done in. (‘The Martyrdom of a Saint’ seems to have given Algardi the idea of his ‘St. Paul,’ at Bologna ;—the figures are composed nearly the same.) The gates are celebrated for the bas-reliefs of Ghiberti, of which we have copies” (prints) “in the Royal Academy.” Of these celebrated gates, casts are now in this country at the School of Design of

London, the Philosophical Institution of Edinburgh, and other similar establishments, and they fully merit every eulogium that can be pronounced upon a work of art. Michael Angelo's observation, that "they were worthy to be the gates of Paradise," if understood as it was intended, to express the perfection of art, is scarcely an hyperbole : no prints of them do them justice.

On the 11th he notes, "The Piazza del Gran Duca contains some good pieces of sculpture, particularly a groupe, by John di Bologna, of the rape of a Sabine; the composition is extremely ingenious and fine; the father, who is down, is in an excellent action, as are the soldier and the female, and in a very grand style. A 'Perseus' in bronze, with the head of Medusa just cut off in one hand, and sword in the other, by Benvenuto Cellini, is a very pretty figure, of a great deal of taste, but heavy in the limbs. The 'Hercules and Cacus' of Bandinelli I think very indifferent, as also every thing else I have seen of his. The famous 'Judith and Holofernes,' of Donatello, I can't admire; two very capital lions, and some good draped antiques."

"12th. Royal Gallery is such an immense collection of fine things, that to study them all would require a month's continued application. The corridor, or gallery, is very beautiful, and contains some good pictures, and more fine pieces of antique sculpture. The series of emperors and their families is a capital one; the heads of Augustus, &c., and that of Constantine, shew the decline of the art in a striking manner. There are some fine whole figures, which I have noted in La Lande; here several students, all generally employed in copying some of the fine things which they are in the midst of; one of those which pleased me most



among the pictures, is a 'Joseph with Potiphar's Wife,' by Biliverti, which I think the best I have ever seen on the subject; the heads and actions are fine, particularly that of the female, and well contrasted: there is something beyond what painting reaches in general,—a perfectly just, moderate, and beautiful expression; his is a manly character, and not too outrageous." A subsequent note says, "It wants but a little refinement in style; is since removed into a dark room."

"But the greatest beauties in this collection are contained in twenty cabinets,—that called the Tribune is in itself the richest perhaps in the world, having several of the finest and most perfect antiques, such as the famous 'Venus,' — 'The Boxers,' — 'Listening Slave,'—'Dancing Faun,' and 'Apollo leaning on his Lyre,' and some of the best pictures in existence. The 'Venus de' Medici' is much superior to all the copies I have ever seen of her, yet she reaches not in my idea the perfection of a beautiful woman; yet even to allow that, which you must do, or quarrel with the whole world, no one I think will offer to say that she has any thing divine in her air; she is not a goddess. The 'Apollo Belvidere' is the god it was designed for: this artist has made but a woman of his Venus." To this he subsequently added, "The arms and hands, which are modern, are ill-drawn and ill-joined at the wrists; the head is not of the first-rate beauty; the contour of the body, hip, and thighs is flowing and lovely, but the legs I am inclined to think rather heavy, or at least not of the most beautiful contour possible."

"The 'Slave' is in a fine style of drawing and characteristic attitude. The 'Dancing Faun' is perfect

character, and the head and hands of M. Angelo as fine as any of the rest. 'The Boxers' are in a very excellent style of outline, and very ingeniously composed; perhaps, but I do not assert it, they are entwined in a manner rather more artificial than natural. The 'Apollo resting on his Lyre' is very sweetly composed, and possesses much beauty, but very little of it in the face. The 'Venus' of Titian appears to me the perfection of colouring; the contours are light and pretty, and the head of a sweet character: it is in the finest preservation, and a *study* for all painters." To this he subsequently appended a note: "Those who have copied it say it is much injured; but it is not perceived at a small distance. Next to it hangs a 'Sibyl,' by Guercino, which I think the most beautiful of all his performances that I have hitherto seen; nothing can exceed the loveliness of character, beauty, and *mellowness* of tone. Three pictures of Raffaele, in his three different manners, hang together. The first is the 'Madonna, Christ, and St. John,' much in the style of Perugino; a pretty composition, sweet character, and good chiaroscuro. That, in his second manner, which Mr. Lanzi says such fine things upon (*vide* La Lande), is much inferior in every one of these points; being the same subject, one may easily judge. The third is the famous picture of 'St. John;' the attitude is forced, uneasy, and of course ungraceful, and the drawing bad; the head only has a pretty good expression, but how this piece got the character it has I am at a loss to guess, other than it is done by Raffaele. I am willing to allow him infinite merits in some of his works,—but why in those which have it not?"

"Here is a fine picture of Andrea del Sarto, of

‘The Taking down from the Cross;’ the composition is good, the expression and attitudes just and simple, the characters fine, and the colouring very tolerable. Raffaele might own it, and it would be called a wonderful work. A good picture of a ‘Bacchante with Satyrs,’ and by Annibal Carracci; it is in a grand style of drawing, but perhaps wants a little delicacy; and a ‘Magdalen’ of Lodovico hangs by its side, which possesses much beauty. A fine portrait by Raffaele of ‘Pope Julius.’ A picture by Rubens, of ‘Hercules withdrawn by Pallas from the arms of Venus,’ a good composition and finely coloured, but the drawing disgusts. A good picture of ‘St. Peter,’ by Lanfranco. Here are two pictures by Correggio, but not worthy of him, who painted the picture at Parma, though you see in the largest the same fine pencil. A ‘Holy Family,’ by Parmeggiano, has very great beauties. Nothing can be finer than the Christ; but the half-figure of St. Jerome has a bad effect, and, besides, appears gigantic.” In a subsequent note, he says, “A jewel is since added of wonderful value; viz. a very fine picture of Lionardo da Vinci.”

“The cabinet in which are the portraits of the painters contains but few good in comparison to the great numbers of indifferent and bad. Those of Rembrandt, Pietro Furini, two of Annibal Carracci, Lionardo da Vinci, and Reynolds, are among the best.”

“The room contains the sixteen figures relative to Niobe (for I cannot perceive how they can call them a groupe); some are very bad, and some well imagined. It seems probable, as M. De Quincy says, that they are copies of some finer work,—*vide* La Lande.” (It will be found, from the following Lectures, that this view

received some corroboration by his reference to a much finer head of Niobe, in the possession of the Earl of Yarborough, of which he made a drawing for the publication of the Dilettanti Society.) "Two fine sketches by Rubens fill the end of the room: the 'Hermaphrodite' is fine;"—to which he has added subsequently a marginal note: "inferior to the two of Borghese." "Large 'Sleeping Venus,' the antique part very beautiful, but the modern arms gross and bad. The 'Adonis' of M. Angelo appears exaggerated in its posture. Here is a good picture of Baroccio; one of Della Porta (better known as Fra Bartolomeo); one of Sodoma (Razzi)." "Next room contains some very fine antique busts, particularly the famous 'Alexander dying;' an uncommon fine 'Adrian,' &c.; and the 'Brutus' of M. Angelo, which I think he did well to quit. I can see nothing of that *fine* character in it which it is said to possess. The cabinet of gems is the richest little room I ever saw. The rooms of Flemish and Italian pictures contain many very good;—the 'Medusa's Head' of Lionardo da Vinci is a wonder; nothing can exceed the fine drawing, character, and expression of the head; the whole is finely coloured and painted; a fine 'Madonna and Child' by Parmegiano; a capital Claude."

"16th. Santa Croce, a very large church, the front unfinished, contains a number of good pictures and the tomb of Michael Angelo; three tolerable figures of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture lamenting, are by three of his scholars."

"Palazzo Pitti, the new ducal palace, has a fine collection of pictures, among which several of Raffaelle, Bartolomeo, Sarto, Rubens, Vandyke, &c."

"18th. Palazzo Riccardi, formerly the residence of the Medici, has a very fine library, a ceiling very well painted and composed, by Luca Giordano, and a few other good pictures, and some tolerable antique busts."

"St. Marco, a very pretty church, but the façade perhaps rather theatrical, contains many good pictures. A chapel, designed by John de Bologna, in which are three good statues by the same,—‘St. Edward the Confessor,’ ‘St. John the Baptist,’ and ‘St. Philip,’ and some good reliefs in bronze."

"19th. Palazzo Gerini has a good collection of pictures, amongst which some of a first-rate beauty, such as a Claude, equal in colouring and effect to any I ever saw, and superior to most in the beauty of the scene; a fine head of Rembrandt, his own portrait when young, is an extraordinary picture, and reminds one of Sir J. Reynolds. Several capital portraits of Titian."

"The church of St. Lorenzo is one of the most remarkable here, the architecture simple and grand, in the style of M. Angelo, and contains some good pictures. Two pulpits, enriched with fine bas-reliefs of the Five Cento. On the right of the great altar is a chapel of the Medici, famous for six statues by M. Angelo. The two figures in the niches (Cosmo and Lorenzo) are very grand, that opposite the entrance particularly so." (This is the sitting figure of Lorenzo the Magnificent, of which Mr. Rogers remarks, ‘that it is the most real, and the most unreal thing that ever came from the chisel.’) "Those recumbent on the tombs have a certain greatness peculiar to the sculptor, but are rather wild sallies of the fancy than resemblances of nature; the females are extravagant to a degree in their style."

Ascending a few steps, a passage leads to the celebrated chapel, which remains a worthy though unfinished monument of the Medicean magnificence (of which Addison prophesied so truly). Nothing I have seen equals the variety, richness, and beauty of the marbles with which the walls are lined; and their value would be much enhanced by the termination of the ceiling and pavement in an accordant manner. The architecture (of Francis II.) is good, and the fine sarcophagi of granite are designed in a manly and impressive style."

"22nd. In a cloister of a convent of monks, called Angeli or Angioli, are some friezes of boys in chiar-oscuro, by Poccetti, of great beauty. Opposite to this is the palace of the Marquis Giugnio, a very polite man, and of great taste in pictures, of which he has many very good; a fine 'Rinaldo and Armida,' by Biliverti, one of the best painters of this school—the expression is very fine; two excellent copies of Raffaello, &c. &c. 23rd. Palazzo *Altoviti* has a very admirable portrait of Raffaello, by himself, of very great truth and force." (This picture is now considered to be a portrait of one of the family, Bindo Altoviti, and not the portrait of the painter himself.)

"Marquis Cerretani has a picture of 'Cupid making his Bow,' which is called Correggio, but appears to me to be a copy; at any rate, it is hard, ill-coloured, and not in his manner. Quære, is the original really of Correggio, or not rather of Parmeggiano? The original exists at Vienna, or in the Orleans collection, each of which has one. P.S. That at Vienna is likewise hard and ill-coloured—the heads are expressive; the whole not at all like Correggio, but very like Parmeggiano." (This opinion is sanctioned by the general concurrence of all

artists, that the original picture is by Parmeggiano. That picture which is mentioned above as being in the Orleans collection, is now in the Bridgewater Gallery.) "Here is a picture of Titian,—a 'Venus,' nearly in the attitude of that at the Tribune, which, from what I could see, has been very fine, but is painted all over in a most cruel manner; a 'Venus and sleeping Cupid,' coloured very beautifully; the head of the child is perfectly fine, but the other not so: it is something of the Guido school. Saw a remarkably grand cartoon (for sale), said to be by Correggio, but appeared to me more like Parmeggiano: the drawing and attitude were in most capital style."

"Walked to Fiesola, one of the most ancient cities of Tuscany, and formerly the rival of Florence. The remains are very inconsiderable, but the view from thence one of the richest and finest, perhaps, in the world. If the Arno were full of water, it would be the most beautiful, at least, that I ever beheld. The country is so covered with villas, villages, and towns, that it seems one continued city; and when a distant town is pointed out, you can hardly perceive where it begins. The cathedral at Fiesola is noways remarkable."

"About half-way up, in a convent of Dominicans, where is an 'Annunciation' of Empoli, the angel is graceful and dignified, and has the most proper expression of any I have seen in this subject. Empoli one of the best of the Florentine school."

During his stay in Florence, he occupied himself in making sketches, and, in some instances, finished outlines of those works he considered of most importance, so that his Journal was occasionally neglected; but on

the 1st of October he makes the following observation on the celebrated church of the Carmine :—

“A very beautiful piece of modern architecture ; the pictures, too, are rather select : a very fine one of B. Poccetti (the best I have seen)—the character and colour good ; the composition, perhaps, rather too full : the keeping is most admirable. One of Empoli opposite, which is extremely good, and excellent, also, in the last particular, which seems his forte ; a spirited relievo by Puggini, but wants purity of style, of ‘The Defeat of Galeas Visconti, second duke of Milan,’ is in the fine chapel Corsini. Masaccio’s famous frescoes are wonderful for their truth of expression ; that particular (which is the *soul* of painting) was carefully attended to in the early days of the art, but has now yielded to a fictitious grace.”

“Gotti, a dealer, has a fine collection of pictures. A sketch of Correggio, two heads of Leonardo da Vinci, or rather of Luino, his worthy disciple ; a ‘St. Peter and St. Paul,’ of Guido, are beautiful, and several others ; but in those of Da Vinci there is an expression so different, and, I think, so superior to what I see in any others, that gave me complete satisfaction.”

“Palazzo Ricci has a fine picture of ‘St. Zenobius reviving a Child :’ the master I do not know, but it is in a great style. Palazzo Strozzi has a few fine pictures. Two or three are of Furini, and are much admired, —particularly ‘The Judgment of Paris :’ his colouring cold and blue to an excess ; the chiaroscuro striking but affected.”

After these observations, nothing appears in his Journal till the 10th of November, exactly two months after his arrival at Florence, when he records :—



“Left with regret the agreeable city of Florence, in company with an English artist, and a gentleman of the Low Countries, with his servant. The weather fortunately changed from the worst to the finest possible. The country is beautiful. Supped at San Casciano at an indifferent inn. The next day, 11th, set out about six o'clock, and passed through a most delightful country, replete with the most picturesque bits I ever saw, to Sienna, where we dined. This city, a bishopric and ancient republic, is situated pleasantly on a hill, is well built, and has many churches worthy of remark. The shortness of my time permitted me only to visit—first the cathedral, which has the most excellent Gothic front I have seen. Some late repairs are ridiculously plain, and spoil the effect of it. One would scarcely believe it possible that such want of judgment could exist. The celebrated pavement deserves its fame, though the person who shewed it was unwilling to trouble himself much in lifting up the boards which cover it. It is a peculiar kind of mosaic, the lights and shadows being laid in in masses, and the outlines engraved and fitted with black. (They are in chiaroscuro, and possess great merit of composition and drawing.) ‘The Twelve Apostles,’ by Mazzuoli (Parmeggiano), are unworthy remark; and a fine picture of ‘Bernard preaching,’ by the Calabrese” (Cav. Mattia Preti, called Il Cav. Calabrese), “has suffered much from time, the shadows being extremely black. There are good things in the frescoes of Salimbeni and Beccafumi. ‘The Crucifix,’ said to be by M. Angelo, does not appear to be of his hand, though not bad. In the sacristy is a fine antique of ‘The Three Graces,’ which is extremely ill placed (in my mind, on every account). The fresco-

paintings, said to be from designs by Raffaello, are only remarkable for the uncommon state of preservation they are in, and for a whole-length portrait of Raffaello."

"The hospital is a large building, from the back of which is a delightful view. The patients seem to be treated with much cleanliness and to enjoy a proper distribution of fresh air. The church contains an extraordinary fine fresco-painting of Sebastian Conca, which has the brilliancy and force of oil—the drawing and colouring are, in many parts, *very fine*, though not universally; but the composition appears to me faultless. I do not perceive, with M. Cochin, that the groupes above injure the effect of the perspective; though willing to allow it very much too yellow, and think it almost the only bad part of the picture. All the attitudes and many of the characters are extremely good, and the architecture is grand. The upper parts of the pillars reach the concave part of the roof, and of course are painted in curves, that they may at a certain point of distance have the effect of being straight. It would not perhaps have been very easy to have contrived a scene so suitable and happy as this to its subject, or else it seems always better to avoid such daring effects of perspective, or rather such partial ones, as they can appear right but from one spot. The church of St. Francisco has a picture of the Calabrese, well painted, but much inferior to that in the cathedral in every point."

He did not see the celebrated "Justice" of Beccafumi, of which Vasari says, "Nor is it possible to imagine, much less to find, a more beautiful figure, amongst all that ever were painted, to appear foreshortened when viewed from below,"—"di sotto in su," as the

Italians express it. Nor did he see the celebrated "Sibyl foretelling the Birth of Christ to Augustus," painted by Baldassari Peruzzi, in the Fonte Giusta; which Lanzi tells us, "is admired as one of the finest pictures in the city. He imparted to it such a divine enthusiasm, that Raffaello himself never surpassed him in treating this subject;" yet in a future page he says, "The 'Sibyls' are in Raffaello's grandest style," and "whoever wishes to see what is wanting in the 'Sibyls' of Michael Angelo, let him inspect those of Raffaello, and let him view the 'Isaiah' of Raffaello, who would know what is wanting in 'The Prophets' of Michael Angelo."

He mentions Viterbo, in passing, "the seat of a bishop—a small city, gloomy and uninteresting—contains a few remains of antiquity. In a church near the gate leading to Florence is a fine picture by Sebastian del Piombo, from M. Angelo,—a 'Pietà,'"—the Italian expression for the subject of the Virgin Mary with the dead body of Christ.

Of his arrival and sojourn at Rome we have no record, but his sketch-books shew his diligent study of the antique and other treasures of the Vatican, the Capitol, and other collections; and they also shew his preparations for a picture he was about to send to England, to compete for what is called the travelling studentship of the Royal Academy. Every third year, one of the students who has gained a gold medal is sent abroad for three years, with an allowance from the Royal Academy of £120 per annum, and an additional allowance for his travelling expenses. The architects, sculptors, and painters take their turn, and are called upon to exhibit

specimens of their abilities, when those who are considered the most advanced are elected by the members of the Academy for the appointment.

In 1792, it became the turn of the painters; and Mr. Howard having already, as we have seen, greatly distinguished himself in the trials of skill at the Royal Academy, determined to send over a large picture and compete for the appointment. The subject he selected was from Gesner's "Death of Abel." "The dream of Cain, suggested by the Evil One, that his descendants were being driven out of their houses with fire and sword by the descendants of Abel." The picture is well conceived and composed; the expression admirable; the figures, which are considerably larger than life, are finely drawn and painted, particularly the figure of Cain, which is in a grand simple style, such as might be expected from so great a lover of the antique sculpture; the landscape very powerfully and dexterously painted; and if there be no great attempt at more than propriety and an historic dignity of colour, tinged with a little of that heaviness which so peculiarly distinguishes the works of all English artists who paint at Rome, it has much less of that objectionable quality than the works of almost any other artist who has been subjected to that influence, said to arise from some quality in the light. This picture was exhibited at some lectures on the Fine Arts at the London Institution, in January, 1847, in defence of the English School from the calumnies of the ignorant, or those prejudiced in favour of every thing foreign, as a specimen of what the *students* of those days were doing in comparison with those who are fondly called *masters* in the present day, whether they be of foreign or native growth or education. The sub-

ject of the picture was an unfortunate selection, as the English public will not tolerate such departures from the sacred narrative as Gesner has made in the suggestion of the motives of Cain for committing the first murder. Gesner was very much in fashion at this time, and appears to have been a great favourite with our artist, as he painted several pictures from his works ; but that was not sufficient to prevent the fate of the picture being as unfortunate as the choice of the subject. It was sent over to the Royal Academy ; but it was intimated to Mr. Howard, that although his picture was unquestionably the best, and he would have been thereby entitled to the appointment, yet as the travelling studentship had been instituted for the benefit of those artists who should not be able to visit the Continent on their own resources, and as by the fact of his being then at Rome he was manifestly not of that class, it was considered more in the spirit of the institution to confer the appointment on the next best painter, which was Woodford, who, after shewing great promise, died many years ago. The picture in question was sent to the Exhibition at the Royal Academy in 1794, and narrowly escaped rejection, as Mr. Howard informed the writer of this memoir ; and thus enabled him to ask in his lecture, of those who contend that we had no English school, "if such a picture as this was nearly turned out of the Exhibition, what must have been the quality of the works taken in ?"

The picture was not sold, and is now in the possession of the writer.

Mr. Howard, during his stay in Rome, also made studies for a picture of "Eve starting at the Reflection of herself in the Fountain ;" in which, with a true feeling

for the ideal, he made a drawing from a young man, in the attitude, in order to incorporate as much of that quality of beauty as was compatible with the peculiar beauty of the female. The principle may be traced in all the finest works of antique sculpture. The female figure, however full the form, while it emulates the delicacy of surface of the child, partakes, in some degree, of the firmness of the male. The flaccidity from which, by the laws of gravity, the finest nature is not quite free, should never appear in the work of art. It is this that degrades Rubens's females; for in point of outline, or actual clumsiness, they are little different from those of Raffaele, or even of Guido, in his celebrated "Aurora."

The next entry we have in the Journal is—"Thursday, May 31. Left Rome at six o'clock. A number of remains of tombs and aqueducts; five miles on the road to Albano are the ruins of a town. The country begins to get pleasant at a little distance from Rome; and the sea bounds on one side the horizon." After which follow some remarks on the natural objects on the road to Castel Gandolfo, and the Lake of Albano, with which he appears to have been very much delighted. "The whole of the scene is most rich and picturesque." "June 1," he notes, "had a pleasant journey to Gensano, situated on the Lake of Nemi, which is extremely rich and beautiful, though small; on the opposite side of the rocks which form its bounds, is the town of Nemi, which adds much to the picturesque effect of the whole. A new church is building at Gensano, the architecture of which is simple and good; a Latin cross, in form, with a dome, by Camporese. Castel Gandolfo has a pretty church of Bernini, with a dome. The Villa Barberini is

the only thing remarkable here, and contains considerable ruins, said to have been part of the palace of Domitian. The garden of the Capuchins of Albano is one of the most delightful spots I ever was in, and has an extensive and beautiful prospect on almost every side: it takes in the whole of the lake, which is seen from here, with Castel Gandolfo, to great advantage, Bocca del Papa, M. Alba, Pollajolo and La Riccia, Gensano, Città Lavinia, on the side towards the sea; and overlooks Albano, takes in Ostia, the Campania, and Rome itself." On the 2nd he went to "Marino, a delightfully-situated little town, about three miles from Gandolfo. A mile or two nearer Frascati is an abbey (Grotta Ferrata), which Benedict fortified. It is on the top of a hill, and looks into a narrow valley, almost choked up with trees and shrubbery in the bottom; a rivulet breaks its way along, and makes altogether a rich landscape, the background of which is Bocca del Papa, and Monte Cavo, or Alba. The buildings of the abbey are a very rich groupe. Here are some frescoes of Domenichino, which are much praised, but do not please me. Some figures are good: the best pieces are those of 'St. Nilo praying in the Desert'; his 'Curing the Possessed Boy,'—the composition of which is well. The saint wants dignity." He then describes the ascent of Mount Cavo, which commands a still more extensive prospect than he had just described. On the 3rd he arrived at the Villa Barberini, where are "some tolerable pictures. Two pretty good copies from Rubens and Vandyck; some landscapes and some peasants of Domenichino, in fresco, are very fine; and likewise a 'Female rising in a car, holding a child in each arm,'—what

it alludes to I know not,—perhaps representing Night, with her two sons, Sleep and Death,—is uncommon and clever.”

Frascati is about one mile further, which he describes as surrounded by “the most beautiful villas I ever beheld, almost all of which have large gardens, and extensive and beautiful views. Monte Aragone, belonging to the Borghese. Here is a colossal head of Antinöus, which is the most beautiful by far existing: fortunately it has been so well preserved as not to need any restoration; the bust only is modern. Here is a very clever picture of ‘The Virgin and Child,’ &c. &c., said to be by Passignano. In the garden is a fine basso-relievo—a statue, the body of which is beautiful, and a pretty draped female figure.”

“Villa Aldobrandini has delightful and extensive gardens, and some curious (trifling) water-works. In a building opposite to the palace is a sort of grotto, whence is issuing a horse, and a multitude of figures seated on a rock (I suppose these good folks were the Muses, the rock Parnassus, &c.), playing on instruments, which are made to sound by means of pipes, when these water-works are set a-going. In this room are some frescoes, by Domenichino, representing the ‘History of Apollo:’ they are in general poor; that of his ‘Fleaing Marsyas’ is the best: the landscape to all is fine. In this garden are some very good antiques.”

“Ride in the evening to Palestrina.

“4th. The mosaic found here is fine, and has puzzled the learned to explain, they being anxious to make out a story in it, when in all probability it is no more than



a landscape with figures, or, as Kircher says, the diversions of Ethiopia and Egypt. Winkleman thinks it the landing of Paris and Helen in Egypt. This valuable piece is in a palace belonging to the Barberini, who are princes in Palestrina. It stands on part of the site of the old temple, and is now suffered to go to ruin. It has a theatre; a clever sketch, or rather dead colour of 'The Wise Men's Offering,' by Guido, and an armoury, which offers a curious specimen of the weapons of the middle ages,—this having been a castle of the Colonnas in the wars with the popes."

"The country near is extremely pleasant, particularly a village three or four miles hence, called Cava, the descent to which offers a delightful picture."

"5th. Came from Palestrina across the country, and over at least ten miles of antique pavement to Tivoli. Am disappointed in the first view of it, being situate among hills extremely barren, and having before it the waste of the Campania: its internal beauties, however, are very great." He proceeds to describe the well-known cascade, the temples of Neptune and Vesta, grottos, &c., and concludes, "To complete the beauty of this extraordinary place, there wants a variety of wood: the olive-trees which surround it are too meagre and colourless, but would have a fine effect interspersed with others, as oaks, &c."

From this time till the 8th of July, 1794, his Journal remained neglected for more important studies; but on this day he left Rome for Florence, over the same ground he had passed previously. His additional observations are confined to the alternations of desert and picturesque country, and on the village of St.

Andrea, where he dined on the 13th, being remarkable for its good wine, and reached the favourite Florence in the evening.

“FLORENCE.—Replete with fine remains of art, both of the ancients and of the illustrious professors of the Cinque Cento.”

After a short blank, in which he appears to have intended to make some other observations, he adds :—

“The Florentine school, as it was the first that rose from the darkness of Gothism, so it set out upon a better and truer principle than any since has done. They combined the study of nature with that of the antique, which was infinitely better imitated by some of the earliest artists of Tuscany than by the whole tribe since. Witness Nicolo di Pisa, Ghiberti, and Giotto and Masaccio. Leonardo da Vinci approached nearer to perfection than any of the moderns ;—as Michael Angelo was perhaps the most daring genius, though he certainly is obliged to Signorelli, of Cortona (in Tuscany), for the foundation of that grand style of drawing, and of his attitudes, foreshortening, &c. Andrea del Sarto, Bartolomeo Frate, &c., are most admirable painters, and may almost rank with Raffaele. The school after M. Angelo ran into absurdity, though it produced a few good artists. Empoli, with respect to truth of effects and keeping objects in their places by the aërial perspective, is equal to any one I ever saw.”

After another *hiatus valdè defendus*, occurs—“On the morning of the        arrive at Bologna, and enter with some difficulty, having no passport,—that of two Russians, unintelligible to the corporal, introduces four

persons. Find this large city is dull or duller than ever, as at this time there is no theatre."

After another blank: "Arrive at Venice: every thing here surprises; it is a new world. The cathedral of S. Marco is extremely singular and interesting, on account of its antiquity; the Piazza beautiful. The ducal palace is much enriched with the arabesque ornaments of the Cinque Cento, and the different halls with gildings, &c., but chiefly by some admirable pictures of Paolo, Titian, Bassan, Tintoretto. Paolo takes the lead here,—the ceiling of the Sala dei Dieci, the Collegio, Anti-collegio, and Scrutinio, are admirable. In the Anti-collegio is a picture of 'Europa,' by Paolo, similar to that at Campidoglio, excepting some few alterations in the composition: this is perhaps superior in beauty, the shadow being clearer, and the whole much better preserved. Tintoret shines here least; his 'Paradise' it is impossible to look at, being a confusion of spots. Bassan has some capital pictures: one in the Sala dei Dieci, three in that of the Capi dei Dieci, two at the head of first staircase, &c.; an extraordinary picture, both for excellence and for its preservation, of Albert Durer, a 'Christ crowned with Thorns,'—the expression is admirable, and the style of painting approaching to Leonardo. Titian, more delicate than the others, has some exquisite pieces: 'The Doge praying' in the first hall, the centre of the Sala del Scrutinio, &c."

"Scarcely a church here but has some fine pictures. S. Giorgio, a beautiful church of Palladio, on an island opposite to the place of St. Mark,—the famous picture of the 'Marriage of Cana,' by Paolo, is in the refectory of a handsome convent belonging to it. The com-

position, considering the subject, is not amiss, *i. e.* with respect to ordonnance." (*Ordonnance* is a word applied to express the arrangement of materials, *wholly irrespective of subject* or expression, but so as to produce an agreeable or imposing whole.) "Christ is not the principal figure, but Paolo. The two architects of the convent, Palladio and Sansovino, are finely contrived (and executed) *in shadow*, to give brilliance to the Christ, though perhaps they could scarcely be accounted for,—an observation that may be applied to the school in general."

"Palazzo Pisani di Polo has the celebrated picture of 'Alexander in the tent of Darius.' It is *finely* composed both as to ordonnance and light and shadow; the colouring perfect. It wants the essentials of costume and expression to make it a wonderful work. It is executed with great neatness, and is in surprising preservation. This picture has been revived of late by some picture-cleaner; a few years ago it was in complete obscurity, according to Mr. Udny.

"Santa Zeccharia, an old church near the palace of the Doge, has a fine picture of Paolo, a good copy of which is at the Campidoglio. St. Bastiano, where Paul was buried in 1588, has in the sanctuary an admirable picture of 'St. Mark and Marcelline,' &c. The refectory, which he painted at twenty-five, shews his dawning genius. There is likewise a fine picture of G. Bellini, 1505, who was to Titian as P. Perugino to Raffaëlle.

"Senola di S. Rocco is a collection of prodigious pictures by Tintoretto. With respect to daring composition, and chiaroscuro, and style of execution, they exceed every thing I have seen. Titian and Paolo

look *petit* in comparison. These, however, are more brilliant in the composition of their colours."

"Tintoret's system seems to have been something like this,—to distribute large masses of light and shade (blending harmoniously) throughout his pictures (light waving generally in a diagonal direction from top to bottom), and light and dark draperies introduced wherever wanted to connect masses of similar colour disposed diagonally; and almost all the front heads relieved dark against a light ground. His compositions are sometimes crowded and extravagant in the highest degree; occasionally they are very fine; witness this 'Annunciation,' which is as poetically and beautifully composed as any thing I know. His style of painting is the most broad and daring I have seen; one would almost suppose he painted with a broom."

"Chiesa di S. Silvestro: a fine picture of Tintoret of 'The Baptism'—St John is chiefly in shadow, relieved by the glory surrounding Christ."

"Palazzo Pisani di S. Silvestro contains some fine pictures of this school, and two of Vandyck—Charles I. and his Queen, very beautiful portraits, and well preserved: they have been but lately discovered."

"TITIAN.—Picture of 'St. Lawrence' in the church of Gesuit, in a bad light, and the shadows are become dark, but the composition, colouring, and effect are admirable—the style of execution large and masterly. In this picture he appears to have aided the principal diagonal line of light by similar-coloured draperies, and thus has doubled its effect on the eye. The difference of tone in the three lights is picturesque and fine, the background grand and sober."

"'S. Pietro Martyre' (in Paolo and S. Giovanni,

a large, old, and curious church, containing several equestrian and other statues of the Venetian generals) is a very fine picture; the flying figure is grand, and the landscape incomparable; the angels above are the best preserved, and are beautiful; the soldier is an awkward figure, but finely coloured and painted, but the composition is not so well as that of St. Lawrence.

“Palazzo Barbarigo (or school of Titian). In the room in which he died (1576) are several of his works, viz. a ‘Prometheus,’ which is grandly composed, and sketched, and coloured; a ‘Magdalen’ of great beauty, resembling that in the Doria palace, though not exactly; a small picture of ‘Venus and Adonis,’ very charming, but inferior in beauty of tone and size to the one it resembles in the Colonna; and a ‘St. Sebastian,’ which is said to be the last of his works: it is unfinished, extremely rough, and shews the trembling hand of age. Also the ‘Venus and Cupid with the Mirror,’ of which so many copies are to be seen: it is an exquisite morsel of colouring.” Opposite to this paragraph he has written,—“Oppositions of colour:—

|              |                              |
|--------------|------------------------------|
| “Crimson     | vice Titian’s brown green.”  |
| “Russet      | moss green, rich and sunny.” |
| “Silver grey | rich deep tawny.”            |
| “Sky blue    | carmelite, orpiment, fox.”   |
| “Rich maron  | poplar green, sky blue.”     |

He left Venice at 1 o’clock P.M., July 29, in a small bark without a single accommodation. The wind being very unfavourable, he did not reach Trieste till July 31, at half-past 12. He “left Trieste on Monday evening at 7, Aug. 2nd. The country mountainous and stony in the extreme. After about forty miles, grows pic-

turesque, more fertile, and cultivated. 3rd.—The people honest, stupid, and slow. Laybach, a picturesque spot, where we dined on the 4th. The landscapes are delightful, and some of them particularly good. 5th.—Dine at Saxenfeldt; the country continuing fine, but not the weather. 6th.—Dine at Foestricht. 7th.—Eirenhausen. Before arriving at this place, had, from the ridge of a high mountain, one of the richest prospects I ever saw, and of great extent. The country is profusely covered with verdure; and the mountains which bound the view are in general of very grand forms. Dine at a village, Leyton. On the 8th sleep at Graatz, a very pleasant city; the entrance to it remarkably picturesque. A sensible difference between this climate and that of Italy. Cold winds and rain. Many very fine studies for landscape-painters offer themselves, and some superior to every thing I have seen in Italy."

"Arrived at Vienna on Sunday, Aug. 11."

"A large city, abounding with noble edifices, and surrounded by very extensive and handsome suburbs. The imperial gallery is in a palace built by Prince Eugene called Belvedere (from its fine view of the city), and is a very capital collection of pictures of all the different schools;—many very fine of the Venetian, particularly a large Titian (which I think the best of his works that I have seen): this appears to be the 'Ecce Homo,' of which alone he has made a coloured sketch. Some *uncommonly* FINE RUBENS and Vandyke; a fine Guido of the 'Baptism of Christ,' of a warmer tone than his pictures in general; some fine Rembrandts, Paolos, &c. &c., and a curious collection of the works of the earliest German and Flemish painters; among

which are some extraordinary fine things by Holbein, &c. Prince Lichtenstein's is an admirable collection, and very extensive;—a 'St. Sebastian' of Titian is the very *ne plus ultra* of fine colouring; the same may be said of 'A pale Woman in a Ruff,' by Vandyke."

"Leave Vienna the 19th of August, at 8 o'clock P.M. Tuesday. An uninteresting route, and bad weather for five days: the country very flat, and, though cultivated, looks poor for want of inclosures. On the 24th, cross the Moldau (a wide and very rapid river, which soon after loses itself in the Elbe). The country improves by the intervention of some mountains, castle-topped, and near Ansich (where we dined on the 25th) offers as fine a picture as I have seen in nature."

"Reach Dresden on the 26th. The road for a few miles being in sight of the river and in good order, is extremely agreeable, and the aspect of Dresden inviting. The town is pretty, but not superb; nor could I find a single building in a good style of architecture, unless the bridge be excepted: this is very long and handsome, consists of fifteen arches, and must be nearly as long as that of Westminster; but the river is considerably narrower, four of the arches being on dry land. The Japanese Palace is next; the handsomest edifice, and contains the gallery of antiques, which are numerous, but in general very indifferent;—a few good busts, two groupes of fauns, &c., a fine vase with a lascivious train of Bacchanals, a charming Etruscan altar—the finest I have seen, and a beautiful draped figure called 'a Vestal.' The gallery of pictures is extremely extensive, and I am inclined to think the finest single collection I have seen. The arrangement



of them is not so good as in the Belvedere at Vienna ; in fact, there is not room to hang them all, and a vast number of excellent pictures, chiefly Flemish, are leaning against the skirting, and many are hung so high as to prevent examination. The Zwinger (a most execrable piece of architecture) contains a collection of natural history, and an extensive collection of prints (reckoned at 160,000). For remarks on the pictures, see sketch-book."

The sketch-book here referred to, contains various sketches from antique sculptures in the Vatican, the Capitol, the Villa Borghese, and Albani. Three views of John of Bologna's "Samson slaying the Philistines," an elegant "Bacchus" by Sansovino, some finely-conceived draped figures by Donatello, groupes from Michael Angelo, pictures by Carlo Cignani, Pompeo Battoni, and Sabbatini, at Bologna, a sketch in sepia of Tintoretto's "Annunciation." The coloured sketch of Titian's "Ecce Homo" at Vienna, above referred to, and a careful sepia drawing from the "Notte" of Correggio, on which his observations are descriptive of the colouring, with a remark upon the brilliancy and admirable diffusion of the light ; but no other comment than that all the shadows of the picture are evidently glazed. On the back of this sketch are some notes of other pictures. "Also a very fine one by Paolo, the 'Adoration of the Kings,' admirable tone, particularly the infant, which is as rich and delicate as Titian. 'Tribute Money' of Titian, much the finest I have seen for delicacy of tinting, and wonderfully finished. A charming composition of Andrea del Sarto, the 'Marriage of St. Catherine.' Fine Raffaele, 'Madonna with infant Christ

in her arm in the Clouds,' male and female saints on the sides, and two angel boys resting on a base below, and looking up with serious countenances; the composition fine, figures highly graceful, draperies large and well, characters of the heads fine, the principal ones divine, the infant's eye very fine." On the opposite page there is a sketch of the upper part of the "Madonna and Child," known by the name of the Madonna di San Sisto, and a careful drawing of the eye of the child.

"'Venus crowned by Cupid,' finer, both in preservation and colour, than that of Florence; the background a beautiful high-finished landscape, of a deep tone, green, brown, and blue; the Venus extremely brilliant and warm—light not yellow; middle tints *rosy*, but warm half-tones; appears to be painted of a fine warm grey and glazed Vandyke brown; knees very ruddy; and the cheeks, toes, and fingers less so; no shadows; feet finely drawn; reposes on a warm whitish drapery of about an equal degree of light with the flesh; delicacy of the half-tints inexpressible. Chiaroscuro wonderfully fine and massy; the boy ruddy and brown; curtain crimson; strongest dark in the cloak of the figure playing on the lute, and his bonnet; his white tunic masses with his music-book, and is carried off to a castle in the distance by a light on his hand, and thence to the mountains and sky, all much subdued, not to lower the groupe. The linen on her thigh yellower than the light of the flesh, but partaking of the same tone. Sky blue, fleshy horizon—full and dexterous pencil; warm and ruddy at the armpits; greys approaching the colour of hay; and all these appear glazed, as well as many of the ruddy tints." On another page he

has a pencil sketch of the subject, with the chiaroscuro indicated, against the sides of which he has noted some of the colours. "Flesh warm—burnt sienna and white ; greys warm, thighs more ruddy, linen fleshy ; ultramarine-ash blue hills and sky, yellow clouds, brown ground,—trees, yellow lights, faded yellow sleeves" (to the lute-player). To this he subsequently added—"The picture at Holkham differs chiefly in the greater quantity of light on the curtain to the right, and on the water to the left, which has swans upon it ; the canvas seems a little more extended on that side, about two arms' width beyond the arm."

His notes at Dresden continued :— "Corregio's first manner has much of Perugino ; his 'St. Jerome' is in his second ; and his 'St. Sebastian' and his 'Notte' in his third ; 'St. George' in his second manner."

"A fine 'Parnassus' of Tintoretto ; a fine 'St. Jerome,' Vandyke, better than one of Rubens of the same subject,—admirable colour and hue. The finest Holbein I know ; 'Madonna and Child,' with six figures kneeling,—no hardness ; it might pass for a picture of Titian ; and a picture of merit, by Albert Durer, near it,— 'Offering of the Magi,' shews him much inferior to his contemporary Holbein—that is like Leonardo, and this Mantegna."

"A very admirable and perfect picture of Rubens,—a satyr, with two ditto boys, and tigress, with whelps sucking ; the principal figure very yellow, and relieved by a grey ground, grey knees and legs. Boy, with a vase catching the wine, extremely bright and warm ; a rich brown tree behind.

"A spirited picture of Rubens, 'Quos Ego,' winds

with wings to their heads, one with thunder in his hand, another with arms finishing from the elbow in wings, and his thighs ending in dragons' tails."

"Best picture I have seen of Quentin Matsys seems 'Usurers bargaining for a Watch.'"

"'The Parents of Moses putting him into the Nile,' a very fine Poussin. The employment of the father, Moses and sister, are excellent. The personification of the river, and the daughter of Pharaoh on the opposite bank, are picturesque. The drawing and effect very fine.

"A fine landscape with lion, tiger, and tigress; hunters chasing ditto in the background.

"A singular picture of Rembrandt,—'Sacrifice of Manoah,' extremely rich, and the expressions fine but vulgar.

"A lovely Vandyck (among many others); three children of Charles I.,—believe it a duplicate of that at Turin; the white drapery seems exceptionable,—quite a lead colour. Somewhat else might have been contrived if he wanted *middle* tints. This picture seems the same as that at the Cancellario at Rome, excepting there is a small dog on each side, and no large one. Two very fine half-lengths, by Vandyck, of 'Charles the First, and his Queen.'"

"Curious picture by Rembrandt,—'Rape of Ganymede;' a little yellow boy, with cherries in his hand, crying, and \* \* \* \* from fear."

"Fine picture by Paolo,—'Faith presenting a Family to the Madonna,' &c. &c. This is one of four pictures in the same room, by Paolo; masses of light lying in serpentine lines, light opposed against dark, and *vice versa*, warm by grey, &c. This school seems some-

times deficient in massing its lights, and to have wanted somewhat of the unity of Rembrandt; and other errors, such as breach of costume and all kind of propriety, are notorious;”—but to this it should be added, that the latter faults—violation of propriety and costume—are shared in by all the greatest masters, not even excepting Raffaele himself, or the “learned Poussin,” and in nearly an equal degree, and they are now being sanctioned in this country, which has hitherto rejected them.

“A large picture, ‘Progress of Bacchus,’ Garofalo, of great merit for composition, also for draperies, and even for drawing, but wanting rather intelligence in chiaroscuro to give repose to the eye.”

He left Dresden “September 5 (Friday morning), and dined at Meisen, the entrance to which offers a picturesque view for an artist, and on the evening of the 6th arrived at Leipsig. The church of St. Nicholas is the most deserving notice here, has been ten years *renewing*, which is nearly completed in a pretty style, and is said at the expense of half a million of dollars. Here are several pictures by Oeser, the friend of Winkleman, which appear very indifferent.” Left Leipsig on Tuesday about noon, the 7th September, and arrived at Stolberg on the 9th, having “had occasion, or perhaps leisure, to remark nothing but the uncomfortableness and delays of the journey.” “On the evening of the 12th arrived at Braunschweig (Brunswick), where I immediately engaged another diligence to convey me to Hamburg. The shortness of time prevented my seeing the ducal collection (five miles distant), and allowed me only enough to walk about the town, which is said to contain 40,000 inhabitants, is very old, and contains some curious Saxon antiquities.” “13th.—

Left Brunswick and came to Lunenburg the 14th," after which nothing particular occurs till "Hamburg, which I reached on the morning of the 15th. Remained here in an uncomfortable lodging at the Elephant, in the Hop-market, about a week; engaged for my passage to England," which he reached after a very rough passage, having been driven so much out of his course as to be compelled to land at Aldborough in Suffolk.

The Saxon antiquities above mentioned appear to have confirmed in the mind of Mr. Howard the idea of painting a picture of "The Introduction of Christianity into the North of England;" a long extract from the Venerable Bede having been copied into the sketch-book, containing his remarks upon the Dresden gallery, some sketches made therein from these Saxon antiquities, and a fine idea of the subject, which he many years afterwards embodied into a picture, which is now in the possession of Philip Hardwick, Esq., R.A., the architect of Goldsmiths' Hall and the Birmingham Railway Company.

The spelling of the names of the artists and places in the preceding extracts from the journal has been carefully preserved, as shewing the gradual transition from a French to an Italian nomenclature.

In the course of his studies at Rome and Florence he joined Flaxman and Deare, another very able sculptor, in making outlines of the "Venus de' Medici," the "Apollino," and other antique statues. Each corrected the other's sketches until they had, like Apelles and Protogenes, made the nearest approach to perfection, and the perfected line was carefully traced off. Many of these remain in the possession of Mr. Howard's family, with a wash of Indian ink flatly laid over the

whole background ; the part within the outline being left white, with the most tender indications of the inner markings in dotted lines. There are several views of each figure.

In 1795 he exhibited at the Royal Academy three small pictures, "Puck and Ariel," which were purchased by Flaxman, and are now in the possession of Miss Denman ; and "Satan awaking in the burning Lake : " he also exhibited a portrait.

In 1796, having fixed himself in Charles-street, Middlesex Hospital, he exhibited a richly-coloured finished sketch of the "Planets drawing Light from the Sun."

" Hither, as to their fountain, other stars  
Repairing, in their golden arms draw light."

*Paradise Lost*, b. vi.

This design he subsequently modified into the picture of "The Solar System," exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1823, which was bought by Jesse Watts Russell, Esq., and of which a duplicate was painted for James Morrison, Esq. ; and an adaptation to a circular form, twelve feet in diameter, painted for the ceiling of the boudoir of the Duchess of Sutherland. The original sketch remains in the possession of the family ; but the sketch of the composition ultimately adopted, in which had been introduced the subsequent astronomical discoveries of the planet Herschel, and the asteroides, Juno, Pallas, Ceres, and Vesta, was purchased by the late Sir Thomas Lawrence.

In 1796 he also exhibited three portraits, a sketch of "The Rise of Morning," from *Paradise Regained* ; and a beautiful little picture of "Venus carrying off Iulus or Ascanius," having left Cupid in his place with

Dido and Æneas, which is in the possession of a gentleman of the name of Hilton.

In 1797 he exhibited at the Academy another small sketch from Milton, beautifully painted and coloured—"Sin and Death passing through the Constellations;" astronomical personification being evidently the ruling passion, which, it will be seen, at various periods in his after-life, manifested its power in the production of many of his most favourite works.

This year he also exhibited a small picture of "Boreas carrying off Orythia," to be engraved as a frontispiece to the edition of Ovid published in Sharpe's Classics; another, of "Hylas carried off by the Naiades," purchased by Thomas Hope, Esq.; "The Visit of the Maries to the Sepulchre," one of several scripture subjects painted for a Mr. Jarvis; "Æolus convoking the Zephyrs," a finished sketch in chiaroscuro, from his favourite Gesner's poem, *The First Navigator*; an "Annunciation," for Mr. Sharpe; and besides, three other portraits, a half-length of "Adam Walker," himself a distinguished lecturer on natural philosophy, and father of Dean Walker, for whose popular *Eidouranion*, Mr. Howard, many years after, made designs of the "Constellations of the Zodiac." He painted another portrait of "Adam Walker" for Romney this year; and was further occupied not only in making designs for Wedgwood's pottery, but in actually painting on the vases themselves; as we find from these entries in his cash-book, 1797:—"Feb. 17, received of Messrs. Wedgwood and Co., in full, for five drawings in chiaroscuro, 6*l.* 6*s.*"

"March 17, of ditto, for painting six vases, £20."

Yet there are a number of persons at the present day



pretending that the fine arts were never connected with the manufactures of this country until they set it on foot; and in this impudent pretence they are supported both by artists and manufacturing houses, who are fully cognizant of the false statement, and who ought to be ashamed of allowing their names to appear to guarantee such a misrepresentation.

In 1798 Mr. Howard removed to Great Marlborough-street, and this year he exhibited a portrait of the Bishop of Winchester (North), and a portrait of the celebrated Mrs. Trimmer, and a picture of "Adam and Eve finding the dead body of Abel," which was painted for Mr. Bryan; "The Women ministering to Christ," one of the set painted for Mr. Sharpe; "The First Navigator, aided by Cupid and the Zephyrs, hailed by the Nereides," which was purchased by Thomas Hope, Esq.; and portraits of the ladies G. and H. Cavendish, and others of less note.

In 1799 he removed to Poland-street, and commenced making that elaborate series of drawings from the antique sculpture in England, of which engravings were published by the Dilettanti Society; his first excursion for that purpose being to Petworth, the seat of the Earl of Egremont, one of the most noble and liberal patrons of the arts this country has ever produced. In 1800 he made four drawings for Mr. Townley, two for Nollekens, and executed some work for Hayley the poet. In 1801 he made two drawings for Flaxman, and subsequently made other drawings for the Society of Engravers, from works of sculpture. These were done in Indian ink, or in chalk, in the most highly-finished style, and with an accuracy that puts the drawing of all other schools to shame, however fashionable continental artists may be.

This year he exhibited, besides the portraits of the Marquis of Hartington and others, a sketch from Shakspeare, "The Mermaid sitting on a Dolphin's back"—

" And certain stars shot madly from their spheres  
To hear the sea-maid's music"—

one of his most beautiful compositions, which was purchased by Hayley the poet, out of the exhibition.

In 1800 he painted several portraits of the Trimmer family, and others; and exhibited the picture of "Eve at the Fountain," for which he had made the studies in Rome; also a small picture of "The dream of the Red-cross Knight," from Spenser's *Faërie Queene*.

In 1801 he married a daughter of Philip Reinagle, was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy, and exhibited a picture of "Achilles wounded by Paris from behind the statue of Apollo," which was purchased by Mr. Hawkins, of Bignor, Sussex, for whom he had painted a picture of "Venus and Anchises," from a very celebrated circular bronze alto-relievo of the workmanship of the purest period of Greek sculpture. For Mr. Hawkins he this year also made a drawing of "Love listening to the flatteries of Hope," a subject which was subsequently repeated in oil for Mr. Astle, and exhibited in 1803; and a small duplicate, painted for the late T. H. Budd, Esq., which is now in the possession of his son, T. W. Budd, Esq., of Norfolk Crescent, Hyde Park.

This year he also exhibited a sketch of *Iris*, a subject he repeated twice afterwards; a picture of "The Angel awaking Peter in prison," purchased by Mr. Rowcroft; and "Adam and Eve listening to the Angels," purchased by a gentleman of the name of

Green. He painted a portrait of Mr. Ferrier, the father of the distinguished authoress of "Marriage," "Inheritance, and Destiny;" a picture from Timon of Athens, for Boydell's Shakspeare; and a transparency for Wedgwood.

In 1802 he exhibited a small picture of "Love animating the Statue by Pygmalion," purchased by — Townsend, Esq.; and a second picture from Timon of Athens, for Boydell. In 1803 he exhibited a portrait of Sir Humphrey Davy; the picture of "Love and Hope," already mentioned; and a picture of "Hebe feeding the Eagle of Jupiter," repeated as large as life in 1813. He painted two small pictures for Mr. Sharpe, "Muli Moluc," engraved for the Spectator, and "Mutius Scævola," engraved for the Tatler; and six pictures for Du Roveray's edition of Pope's Homer's Iliad, among which was the subject of "Achilles killing Lycaon," one of the most spirited as well as most classical of that magnificent series of illustrations. He also painted for Mr. Du Roveray a picture from Statius, for the same series; and on the 30th of December he received fifty guineas from the Patriotic Fund, for a design for a medal, and from this time made the designs for all the principal medals and the great seals executed during his life. These designs, and the drawings for the Dilettanti Society, established Mr. Howard as the first authority on all questions of classical art. In 1804 he exhibited a picture of "Helenus and Cassandra sleeping in the Temple of Apollo; serpents came and wound themselves about them, licking their ears, by which they were rendered capable of hearing the council of the gods, and became chief soothsayers," purchased in 1813 by a gentleman of the name of Clarke;

and in 1805 he commenced that series of pictures from the story of Sabrina, in Milton's *Comus*, that furnished him with subjects to almost the end of his professional career. Several of these are in the possession of Mr. Budd, one in the possession of Philip Hardwick, Esq., and one in the collection of Sir John Swinburne, and another in the collection of Lord Northwick. This year he also commenced the superintendence of the splendid works published by the Rev. Edward Forster, the British Gallery of Engravings, from pictures of the highest excellence in Great Britain; and the British Gallery of Contemporary Portraits, for the engravings of which he made many copies from pictures, and touched the proof for the engravers. Mr. Forster had married the daughter of Banks the sculptor, and in 1806 Mr. Howard moved into the studio and house of that great artist, in Newman-street, which he occupied till the day of his death. This year he painted an extensive frieze for George Hibbert, Esq., of the subject of "Cupid and Psyche," a picture of "Hero and Leander," and "Christ with Mary Magdalen in the garden," which it is believed was purchased by Mr. Hibbert; and he exhibited portraits of Mr. Forster and of John Shaw, the architect of St. Dunstan's Church, at Temple Bar.

In 1807 he exhibited a picture purchased by Mr. Rowcroft, of "The infant Bacchus brought by Mercury to the Nymphs of Nysa," a subject which he repeated on a larger scale in 1836.

In 1808 he was elected an academician, and in 1809 exhibited a picture of "Christ blessing little Children;" the figures as large as life, which is now the altarpiece at St. Luke's, in Berwick-street, a district church of the parish

of St. James's, Westminster ; and furnished the article "Drawing," and the plates relating thereto, for the *Encyclopædia* published by Messrs. Longman. He painted a small picture of "Venus and Cupids," for Mr. Strutt, of Derby, which appeared in the exhibition of the following year ; together with a picture of a "Sleeping Titania," purchased by Mr. Chamberlaine ; and a portrait of his eldest daughter, as a "Little Girl picking up shells on the sea-shore," and listening to the "roar of the sea" within ; which was purchased by Sir Francis Freeling.

On the 26th of March, 1810, he was appointed deputy to Mr. Richards, the secretary to the Academy ; and on the 11th of February, 1811, he was elected secretary in lieu of that gentleman, who had died in the interval. In 1812 he exhibited a whole-length portrait of Sir Claudius S. Hunter, the Lord Mayor of London for that year, and a small picture of "Mars, Venus, and Cupid," and some portraits of children in rustic characters. In 1813 he exhibited his large picture of "Hebe," and painted two of his *Sabrina* pictures and a "Repose in Egypt," for Mr. Budd ; and in 1814 was commissioned, on the part of the government, by Sir William Congreve, to paint the large transparencies for the Temple of Concord erected in Hyde Park, as part of the display on the rejoicings on the arrival of the Allied Sovereigns at the short peace, during the abode of Napoleon at Elba. In these transparencies he was assisted by Mr. Stothard, Mr. Hilton, Mr. Renton, and Mr. F. P. Stephanoff. There were four long subjects, representing allegories of Peace and War, and the genius of France presenting the sceptre to the genius of the Bourbons under the auspices of Britannia and the

genii of Austria, Russia, and Prussia; and a triumphal procession, designed and painted by Mr. Stothard, and four upright subjects, of which Mr. Stothard also designed and painted one; the other three were "Discord banished from Heaven," "Britannia overthrowing Tyranny," one of the grandest compositions he ever made, and "Victory crowning the statue of the Prince Regent." He also painted a transparency for Messrs. Rundell and Bridge, for whom this year he made some designs for ornamental plate. Nor was he idle in the more usual avocations of his profession, for in this year's exhibition at the Royal Academy we find, besides portraits, a large groupe of "Swiss Peasants," and a picture called "Sunrise."

"First in the east the glorious lamp was seen,  
Regent of day, and all the horizon round  
Invested with bright rays, jocund to run  
His longitude through Heaven's high road; the grey  
Dawn and the Pleiades before him danced,  
Shedding sweet influence."

*Paradise Lost*, b. vii.

This picture, since better known as "The Pleiades," passed through the exhibition without being sold, and was then sent to the exhibition at the British Institution, the directors of which had offered a premium of 200 guineas for the best, and 100 guineas for the second best, poetical or historical picture exhibited at their gallery. They sent to Mr. Howard to tell him that there could be no doubt but that he had sent the best picture, and was entitled to the first prize, but they inquired "whether he would take it if it were awarded to him?" He replied, "that as he had not sold his

picture, he should most unquestionably take it." To which they rejoined, "that the prizes were not intended for artists of established reputation, but for students;" on which he said, "they should have so announced it." The directors ultimately gave the first premium to Mr., now Sir George, Hayter, *for a head*; and the second premium, 100 guineas, to Mr. Howard, for "The Pleiades." Mr. Howard complained of the injustice which had been done to him, and the Marquis of Stafford, one of the directors, turned suddenly round to him, and said, "What is the price of your picture?" "200 guineas," was the reply: "Then send it home to me." On the 8th of April Mr. Howard received the 100 guineas premium; and on the 20th of the same month he received 200 guineas for the picture. Some time afterwards Sir John Leicester applied for permission to have a copy of this picture, and that duplicate was always considered the greatest ornament of his noble gallery of British art.

In 1815 he exhibited two of the Sabrina pictures, already referred to, and a picture of "Morning"—

" Waked by the circling hours,  
Unbars the gates of light."

*Paradise Lost.*

In 1816 he exhibited a picture of "The Punishment of Dirce," who was tied to the horns of a wild bull,—the same subject as the antique groupe called the "Toro Farnese." In the ensuing season it was sent to the gallery of the British Institution, but remained unsold. He subsequently painted on it at various times, and having, as he considered, greatly improved it, again sent it to the British Institution for exhibition, in

January, 1845 ; but this year a new regulation had been made, that no work should be admitted for exhibition which had been previously exhibited in London ; and Mr. Howard's picture was rejected on that ground, as it had appeared in that gallery thirty years before, although considerably altered and repainted ; while others were admitted and exhibited which had appeared at Westminster Hall in June, 1844—only six months before, and which there was not the slightest pretence for saying had been improved, modified, or even touched on in the most trifling degree.

In 1818 Sir Matthew White Ridley, Bart., purchased out of the Royal Academy a picture of "Fairies,"

" That on the sands with printless feet  
Do chase the ebbing Neptune, and do fly him  
When he comes back."—*Tempest*.

the most beautiful picture of its size that Mr. Howard ever produced. Sir Matthew Ridley at the same time gave Mr. Howard a commission to paint a large picture of "The Birth of Venus," which was exhibited in 1819, at the Royal Academy, and is unquestionably not only the finest picture the artist ever painted, but the finest of its class in existence. Sir Thomas Lawrence purchased one of the sketches made for the picture as ultimately completed ; another, in which the principal figure was half seated in the shell, was purchased by Lord Colborne, a small repetition of which was painted for Alaric A. Watts, Esq.

In 1818 Mr. Howard painted a picture of "The Apotheosis of the Princess Charlotte," for Lord Egremont, who, in 1820, purchased out of the exhibition at the Royal Academy, "A study of Beech Trees in Knowle



Park," a very fine landscape, a branch of art in which the backgrounds to his poetical subjects had previously shewn that he was qualified to have taken the very highest rank.

At the same exhibition he also produced a small picture from Lear, "The Death of Cordelia," painted for Sir John Soane.

In 1821 Lord Egremont purchased out of the exhibition of the Royal Academy, a picture of "The House of Morpheus."

"Amid the bowels of the earth, full deep  
And low, where dawning day doth never peep,  
His dwelling is. There Tethys his wet bed  
Doth ever wash, and Cynthia still doth steep  
In silver dew his ever drooping head,  
Whiles sad Night over him her mantle black doth spread."

*Spenser's Faërie Queene.*

In 1822 his contributions to the exhibition were two small pictures from the Tempest—"Prospero releasing Ariel from the Pine," and "Caliban teased by the Spirits of Prospero,"—a scene from Manfred, where he summons the Witch of the Alps under the mountain torrent—

"*Witch*.—I have expected this; what wouldst thou with me?  
"*Manfred*.—To look upon thy beauty—nothing further"—

and a whole-length portrait of "Edward the First," from the best existing documents, painted for the late Sir Richard Puleston, of Emral, Flintshire, who held some property in Wales under a grant from that sovereign.

In 1823 he exhibited at the Royal Academy the "Solar System," already referred to, which was purchased by Jesse Watts Russell, Esq.; and in 1824, a

portrait of his daughter in a Florentine dress, the costume in which Lionardo da Vinci represented *La Belle Feronnière*, and remarkably minutely finished in imitation of the style of the painting of Lionardo da Vinci. This picture was purchased by Lord Colborne, and became so popular that Lord Kennedy commissioned Mr. Howard to paint a duplicate of it, and several pictures of similar class, exhibited during subsequent years, were purchased by Mr. Vernon and others. The late Duke of Bedford had a portrait of one of his nieces, and the Earl of Carlisle had one of his daughters, Lady Blanche Howard (the late Countess of Burlington), painted in a similar style, which was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1827; in 1829 he exhibited a companion to his "Solar System," under the title of "Night,"

" Now glowed the firmament  
With living sapphires : Hesperus, that led  
The starry host, rode brightest, till the moon,  
Rising in clouded majesty, at length,  
Apparent queen, unveiled her peerless light,  
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw."

*Paradise Lost.*

which was purchased by Jesse Watts Russell, Esq.

In 1830 he painted a picture of "Shakspeare nursed in the lap of Fancy."

" The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,  
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven ;  
And as imagination bodies forth  
The forms of things unknown."

This is now in Sir John Soane's Museum, having been purchased out of the exhibition at the Royal Academy, where Mr. Howard had also one of his *Sabrina* pic-

tures, and a picture of "Aurora ushering in May Morning."

"Now the bright morning star, day's harbinger,  
Comes dancing from the east, and brings with her  
The flowery May, who from her green lap throws  
The yellow cowlip and the pale primrose."

*Milton.*

This picture was purchased by James Morrison, Esq. And next year Mr. Howard exhibited at the Academy a picture of "Circe,"

"My mother Circe, with the sirens three,  
Amidst the flowery-kirtled Naiades,  
Culling their potent herbs and baleful drugs,  
Who, as they sung, would take the prison'd soul  
And lap it in Elysium; Scylla wept,  
And chid her barking waves into attention,  
And fell Charybdis murmured soft applause."

*Comus—Milton.*

purchased by Sir John Soane.

His contributions to the next year's exhibition were a picture of "Medea meditating the Murder of her Children," and another of the "Contention of Oberon and Titania,"

"Oberon.—Give me that boy, and I will go with thee.

"Titania.—Not for thy kingdom—Fairies away;  
We shall chide downright, if I longer stay."

*Midsummer Night's Dream.*

which is also in the Soane Museum.

In 1833 he was elected Professor of Painting to the Royal Academy. This year he exhibited a picture of a "Chaldean Shepherd contemplating the Heavenly Bodies,"—the supposed origin of poetical astronomy.

"And fancy rapt, sees in the fleecy clouds  
Celestial shapes that wait upon the moon,  
In her swift course, or rise from Ocean lap,  
Continuous."

In 1834 he was engaged in preparing his Lectures, and on the adaptation of the "Solar System" to a circle twelve feet in diameter, for the ceiling of the boudoir of the Duchess of Sutherland, already mentioned, and only contributed two small pictures to the exhibition—"The Gardens of Hesperus," purchased by W. Peart, Esq.; and "The Lady benighted," from Comus,"

"This way the noise was, if mine ear be true"—

which is now in the collection of Lord Northwick.

In 1835 he was engaged upon the pictures for the ceiling in Sir John Soane's Museum:—"Pandora receiving the Gifts of the Gods," in the centre; "Mercury bringing her down to earth," at one end; and "Epimetheus opening the fatal Box;" with two pictures of "Night and Morning," between them.

In 1836 he repeated the subject of "The infant Bacchus brought by Mercury to the Nymphs of Nysa," on a larger scale; and in 1837 painted a modification of Guido's "Aurora" for another ceiling in Sir John Soane's Museum; and four pictures for R. Holland, Esq., of the subjects to be repeated on the flags which he gave to the great Nassau balloon. One of these subjects was "Dædalus and Icarus;" another "Bellerophon mounting Pegasus;" and a third, "The British Flag borne by Zephyrs across the ocean."

In 1839 he exhibited a picture of "The rising of the Pleiades;" in 1840, a "Rape of Proserpine,"—a picture in which, contrary to his usual practice, the landscape formed the principal part of the composition. In 1841 he repeated on a larger scale the subject of "The Mermaid sitting on a Dolphin's back," and produced one of the most beautiful pictures he ever painted.

This year he was strongly urged by Mr. Rogers, and others of the Royal Commission, to enter into the cartoon competition, which took place in 1842, but apparently only to be insulted by having the prizes given, for very inferior works, to "rising geniuses," cultivated under the auspices of *great foreign* artists, who have since manifested their utter incapacity to deal with any subject of importance; and this, notwithstanding Mr. Howard had sent in a cartoon of "Man beset by contending Passions,"—one of the grandest subjects, treated in the grandest style, that had ever been produced in any school, or at any time. But all surprise that may be felt at such conduct will vanish when it is observed that of the judges, three were directors of that British Institution which had been allowed without resistance, in 1814, to use him so ill with regard to their own premiums, as previously related. The cartoon was subsequently presented to the Royal Academy.

Mr. Howard felt the effects of age and a very laborious life coming on him, and that this would be the last effort of any importance that he would probably make; and it is to be regretted, for his own fame, that he would not be prevailed on to give up exhibiting after this year, 1842, when he sent to the Royal Academy a picture of "Aaron staying the Plague," and a small picture of "Faith, Hope, and Charity," purchased by a brother of Sir John Swinburne, Edward Swinburne, Esq., one of the most distinguished amateur water-colour draughtsmen that ever lived, an old friend of Mr. Howard, and who died only a few days before him.

In 1843 he exhibited two of the sketches he had

made for the long transparencies of "War and Peace," painted for the commemoration of the peace in 1814; and a "Nativity," from Milton's Hymn for Christmas Day, which shewed considerable power in the general arrangement, *chiaroscuro*, and tone of colour, but manifested that his hand and eye for form were beginning to fail. In 1844 he exhibited a picture of Jubal striking

"the corded shell;  
His listening brethren stood around,  
And wondering, on their faces fell  
To worship that celestial sound."

In 1845 he exhibited a grandly-conceived early sketch from *Thalaba*, and an "Incident" from *Anne of Geiersteine*, of which the landscape was the principal subject, and has been much admired.

In 1846 a pretty sketch, very rich in colour, of "Psyche wafted over the mountains by Zephyrus;" and in 1847 a richly-coloured sketch of the "Ascension;" but his hand at this time had become so unsteady as to resist all control with regard to form.

In 1845 he had commenced a large picture of a subject mentioned by Pliny as having been painted by Timanthes, "A Cyclops having been found asleep by a party of satyrs and nymphs, one of them measured the giant's thumb with a thyrsus." It was hoped that the size of the figure, about twelve feet high, would meet the failing of his sight and growing unsteadiness of hand, and had he finished the picture at once it might have done so, as it was grandly conceived and powerfully laid in; but he neglected it for other works of smaller size until a short time before the exhibition at Westminster Hall in 1847, when his feebleness and his dimness of sight so far destroyed what he had

begun satisfactorily as to occasion the greatest regret from all parties who wished him well, that he should persevere in his intention to exhibit it.

The business devolving upon him as secretary of the Royal Academy had gradually increased, as his power to perform it had gradually decreased; and in the summer of 1847 it was proposed that he should have a deputy to perform the duties of the office for him during the remainder of his life. Mr. Knight was appointed to that situation.

On the 5th of October the subject of our memoir terminated his earthly career at Oxford, where he spent the last month of his life in the quiet enjoyment of all that his increasing feebleness would permit. His younger son had recently been given a fellowship at Radley College, Oxford, and he was received with the greatest attention and kindness by every one in connection with the college. The weather was very fine, and enabled him to ramble over the buildings and gardens of the university, which he had always greatly admired. He gradually sank without suffering, and without his mental faculties being impaired, and he expired at 8 o'clock in the morning.

To this account of the numerous works he publicly exhibited during his long life might be added many very beautiful drawings, and pictures painted for particular parties, but never exhibited—such as the drawing of “Oberon squeezing the juice of the flower into the eyes of the sleeping Titiana,” made for Mrs. Haldimand’s celebrated album; a picture of the same subject painted for Alaric A. Watts, Esq.; the drawings made for Charles Heath’s “Keepsakes,” and other illustrated works; “The Lost Pleiad,” for the unfortunate

L. E. L.; and another picture from the same poem, painted for Mr. Samuel Carter Hall, editor of the *Art Union*.

Late in life he visited the Netherlands in company with Mr. Swinburne, and was much surprised at the grandeur of the splendid works of Rubens at Antwerp and Cologne, in spite of the occasionally coarse forms; and in 1838 he went to Munich, where he was still more astonished at the powers of this prince of painters as exhibited in the "Last Judgment," and the "Fall of the Angels;" "The Woman clothed in the Sun," from the Revelations; the "Battle of the Amazons," &c.; so much so, as to "compare the 'Last Judgment' with that of M. Angelo, the sublimest effort of the art," and to ask, "what conclusion must we come to? Is it inconsistent to admire both, though their merits are of so opposite a nature, or could their respective excellencies be in any degree combined? The transition from *fresco* to *oil*-painting essentially altered the character of the art, and in itself seems to account for its degradation from the sublime to the ornamental—the latter quality soon became the aim and object of artists—the intellectual and poetical, if ever combined with it, is now supererogatory, and passes unnoticed."

Here also he found "the Venus, from the Braschi palace at Rome, which Flaxman used to prefer even to the Medicean. I am inclined to agree with him. The head is more beautiful and ideal—the forms more delicate and youthful—the *pose* more simple, more full of delicacy and sentiment."

He was also much struck with the works of the modern artists at Munich, particularly those of Cornelius, Schnorr, Zimmerman, and Hesse. There were



some classical subjects, finely treated, which probably revived the recollection of his earliest associations, and induced a more favourable judgment than could have been sustained on a closer examination, as was the case with his prejudice in favour of French drawing, until he found himself deprived of his deserts when brought into competition with it.

Any critical remarks upon his professional capabilities might come with an ill grace from the writer of this memoir ; but in explanation of some observations in the following lectures, it may not be amiss to recal the reader's attention to the fact of the bias given to his taste in early years, both by his French teacher, and by his frequent visits to the French capital during the classic *furor* which raged in the earlier stages of the Revolution :—the correction in *practice* which resulted from the education he received in England and on the continent, and in his close study of the genuine classic antique sculpture in the elaborate drawings for the Dilettanti Society ; while he had his attention equally directed to pictorial qualifications by the copies of celebrated pictures for Forster's splendid works, and the superintendence of the engravings from the most magnificent specimens of all the masters of the art to be found in this country—and, after this education, had to exercise his profession during the most glorious period of the English school, when Sir Joshua Reynolds, Romney, Opie, Owen, Fuseli, Stothard, Smirke, Westall, West, Northcote, and Sir Thomas Lawrence were flourishing. This led him, in spite of his better practice, to yield in theory to his French and *statuine* predilections, and to praise the mechanical hard making out of solid forms, such as is found even in the best

specimens of the French school, as superior to English drawing, notwithstanding the utter want of selection or even accuracy of character in the forms so carefully made out ; and to praise the sculptural backgrounds of the old French classical school as "learned," because they resembled the arrangement of the antique bassi-relievi, to which he was so accustomed ; an arrangement which might be well adapted to sculpture, but was wholly unfit for painting, and has since been abandoned by the French artists themselves. But he had been unfortunately led to encourage this antinational prejudice, until it became too late to rectify it, and he became in time a victim, as he had witnessed, unresisting, the fall around him of all those ornaments of the English historical school, whose reputation, it is hoped, will yet rise to their true estimation, as superior to any school that has yet existed in all the higher qualities of the Fine Arts, and whose names are now only depreciated because their best works are unknown.



LECTURES ON PAINTING.



# LECTURES ON PAINTING.



## LECTURE I.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,

THE Lectures on Painting annually delivered from this chair have now been continued for so long a period, and have brought together such a mass of sound doctrine and lucid criticism, that it would seem scarcely possible to add any thing very novel or important to the information you already possess in the writings of those eminent men whom I have the honour to follow. The regulations of the Royal Academy, however, continue to require from the Professor “six lectures in each season, calculated to instruct the students in the principles of composition ; to form their taste in design and colouring ; to strengthen their judgment ; to point out to them the

beauties and imperfections of celebrated works of art, and the particular excellences of great masters; and, finally, to lead them into the readiest and most efficacious paths of study." In the discharge of this duty it will, of course, be necessary for him to re-iterate much that has frequently been inculcated before. Elementary principles which have been correctly deduced cannot be changed; but, happily, the aspects under which Nature presents herself to the eye and sympathies of the painter, are so infinitely various, and leave such different impressions on different minds, that if we are unable to discover any entirely new views, or open an entirely new path, we may still find ample materials for investigation, and abundant topics for useful remark.

In the fulfilment of my office, it will be my endeavour once more to bring before you the most approved principles of the art, and to explain, in its several technical divisions, the precepts and practice of those great masters, from whose standard productions our stock of theory is derived; as well

as to offer to your attention the opinions I have been led to form in my professional career, now of some length, with such observations and suggestions as may appear likely to assist you in your progress.

Before entering on the didactic part of my task, I propose briefly to consider what are the peculiar and indispensable properties of painting; to state my conception of its capabilities and demands, and of its true rank and position in the circle of the fine arts. All the arts spring from an inherent desire in man to enlarge the sphere of his enjoyments, and improve his well-being. As soon as he has learned, by the help of the mechanical arts, to secure for himself the necessaries of life, and has advanced a few steps in civilization, we find he everywhere begins to turn his attention to the arts of elegance and refinement, to what are called the liberal or imaginative arts; and calculated as these are to withdraw him from the grossness of mere sensuality, to unfold and exercise some of his noblest faculties, and provide him with a train of pleasures suited



to his own mixed nature,—from which he may reap, not only amusement, but great moral advantage,—they may well be regarded as benefits worthy of the Supreme Giver of all good gifts; for many of them, under due regulation, are capable, in an important degree, of purifying the affections and spiritualizing the mind; their sublime aspirations are strongly expressive of a yearning after a more perfect state of things, and, while they supply us with a delightful solace here, may perhaps afford a glimmering indication of the higher destiny that awaits us hereafter, and even help to qualify us for its enjoyments. These arts, though each is distinguished by some peculiar characteristic, possess many qualities in common, and a strong mutual resemblance, which mark them to be the sisters of one lovely family, who reciprocally assist, adorn, and support each other. Thus, Eloquence derives her rhythm from Music, her imagery from Poetry; the latter obtains her measures and harmony from Music, her graphic descriptions from Painting. Dancing combines Poetry with

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motion and gesture, regulated by Music; Sculpture lends her aid to Architecture; and the Drama, an eclectic art, borrows from all. Their general object is that of presenting to us enjoyments and gratifications adapted to our innate appetencies, which are suggested by nature, but must be sought for, selected, and carried on, upon certain deduced maxims of art. To this end, an agreeable stimulus of the organs, by which our perceptions are conveyed to the mind, is made to contribute in no inconsiderable degree: hence Addison describes the pleasures of the imagination as holding a middle station between those of mere sense and the more abstract pursuits of intellect.

Painting, as I shall have occasion to show, bears a striking analogy both to poetry and music, and seems, indeed, to blend and unite their respective qualities, in a medium of her own; rivalling the former in her inventive faculties and intellectual power, and the latter in harmonic arrangement and fascinating influence on the sense; but

painting is more especially and essentially an imitative art.

Imitation is its peculiar and distinguishing element,—the property by which it first catches our fancy, and challenges our attention ; and, in this respect, is at once more extensive in its range, and more ingenious in its mode of operation, than any other of the same class ; for, with apparently very inadequate means, (light and dark tints,) the painter is able to copy the appearances of things so perfectly as to produce illusion ; and, in certain cases, even to deceive the eye. The great and general admiration excited by this capability has misled some to suppose, that deception is not only the prerogative, but the real end and aim of painting. As this error—though of little practical moment—lies at the root of our whole theory, and as those who are entering upon the study of an art should be aware of its true philosophical basis and extent, some examination of this opinion may not be useless.

That uncultivated minds should not be able to discriminate between the means and the end, affords no grounds for surprise ; but it is somewhat remarkable that literary men of modern times should have unreflectingly fallen into this mistake respecting an art so much discussed by admired writers of different ages. It is this quality, however, which they have generally considered to be the painter's chief, if not exclusive, title to praise. Thus Cardinal Bembo, in his famous Epitaph on Raffaele, and Pope in his application of it to Kneller, evidently speak as if they conceived deceptive imitation to be the great merit of those painters ; and, of course, we may infer of the art itself,—

“ ‘ Great Nature,’ living, fears he shall outvie  
Her works, and dying fears herself shall die.”

The extravagance of the hyperbole establishes this conclusion. The same notion seems to have been entertained by Rousseau, when he said, with his usual eccentricity, “Painters can give the appearance of a body in relief to a flat surface : I should like to see them

give the appearance of a flat surface to a body in relief;" in which he probably thought that he had suggested, if not an insuperable difficulty, at least, the true test of a painter's skill; and Du Piles, who had made our art his study, and collected much that is valuable respecting it, distinctly states, that the "end of painting is to deceive the eye."

It is difficult, notwithstanding, to believe that he could mean this assertion to be understood literally, for he must have been aware that there is no attempt at deception in the works of those great painters whom he so justly extols, and in his scale places at the head of the art! At any rate, a moment's reflection will convince us that it should not be so understood; for surely the rational aim of all works of skill is to be recognized as such,—as the productions of art, and not to be mistaken for those of nature.\* A perception of the artist's skill is always one cause of the delight he affords us: "some the

\* An elegant writer on the Picturesque well observes, that "Art may challenge admiration on its own account, and not in the disguise of Nature."

workman praise, and some the work." We have an additional pleasure in the exercise of criticism, and like to have something to discover and explain. We refer, in our "mind's eye," the imitation to the original type, and, if satisfied with the resemblance, our admiration is reflected on the artist: the copy may and will please us the more, from being in a high degree illusive, because we are still more impressed with his ability; but if the imitation be so close as to deceive, and we believe the objects to be real, it follows that for us neither the art nor the artist have any existence; the latter has annihilated both by misapplied ingenuity. The little triumph of surprising the spectator into such a delusion is but a pitiful ambition, and the trick, when proclaimed, is applauded only with a smile.

The grapes of Zeuxis and the curtain of Parrhasius were never considered as other than sportive feats of those artists; and (though conclusive evidence of their imitative powers) were neither received as the

test of their excellence as painters, nor classed with their legitimate pictures.

It is obvious, besides, that many things which please as works of art would, if mistaken for realities, be passed unnoticed, or turned from with terror or distaste, and could have no chance of interesting us, but in being immediately recognized as imitations.

Some of my hearers may be disposed to think that I am here rather contending with shadows, and that there is no fear of mistaking for real, objects represented in a picture, surrounded by a frame, and hung up against a wall, any more than there is of being deceived by dramatic representations, when in a brilliant saloon we find crowds of spectators clapping their hands at the distresses of Belvidera, or listening with pleasure to the ravings of Lear. It is obvious that, under such circumstances, there can be little chance of being deceived; but both cases prove that neither of these most highly imitative arts, though it seeks to pro-

duce a considerable degree of illusion, ever aims at absolute deception. As it is my duty to point out clearly to the student an erroneous principle, which has been sometimes contended for, I shall add a few remarks in further illustration of its correctness.

However natural it may be, at the first glance, to suppose that imitations when attempted cannot be too completely effected, and therefore that deception must be the final cause of mimetic art, this is so far from being the fact, that it is curious to observe what a very slight degree of imitation is sufficient to satisfy us; and how readily the mind, fond as it is of truth, acquiesces in the total absence of many essential qualities of the subject represented.

Thus a mere outline will often excite the imagination of the intelligent, and stir the feelings more effectually, than many an elaborate picture; as we see in the beautiful and pathetic compositions of our revered Flaxman.

We are all aware, too, how often a spirited



and expressive sketch is preferred to a finished work—the mind being less disturbed by a consideration of the details, is more immediately drawn to the main intention and sentiment of the design; we are pleased also with the taste, dexterity, and skill, which it shows in the artist, and the imagination overlooks or supplies the rest. Even colour, although so eminently attractive, may not only be omitted altogether, as we find in many admired drawings and paintings in *chiar'oscuro*; but in the best productions of sculpture and engraving colour is now systematically excluded, as unsuited to the other qualities, and more confined but higher aim of those arts. I may mention also, as a remarkable instance how far this abstraction may be carried, that in many of the masterpieces of sculpture (the Apollo, the Laocoon, the Venus) one of the most striking features in the human countenance, the eye-ball, is not even indicated. All these are evidently more or less deficient representations of nature, and (with many others which might be adduced) prove that

the pleasure we derive from the productions of art does not depend on their absolute truth or even closeness of imitation, but that those natural properties which we are content to give up, are more than compensated to our minds and sympathies by some poetical or technical charms, some secret qualities, which are often more easily to be felt than explained.

The observation of Johnson, then, is fully justified, "that imitations please, not because they are mistaken for realities, but because they bring realities to mind."

A certain modified imitation of natural appearances is only the medium by which our art presents her conceptions to us; her natural language, but not her ultimate aim. The noble works upon these walls show that Painting possesses an original inventive power, and, like Poetry, addresses herself to the mind and to the heart.

It is this close affinity with Poetry which raises Painting to the high rank she is entitled to hold among the intellectual arts. They are both avowedly arts of fiction,

capable of giving charms to many objects, in themselves of little interest, and of lending attractions to Nature herself. The *true* end of both is to please, by presenting us with images of whatever is calculated to excite our sympathies,—to hold the mirror up to nature, and reflect vividly to our fancy whatever is beautiful or emphatic, dignified or pathetic, in all that surrounds us; whatever is calculated to delight, refine, and exalt us; “to rouse the genius,” and “to mend the heart.”

This imagination and inventive spirit (the true spirit of poetry) is indeed the divine spark which animates the whole circle of the liberal arts—the common principle and bond of union, long since remarked in them, which is modified and characterized in each by the different medium in which it operates, and the materials it employs.

It is true that poetry, which seems to occupy the centre of this interesting group, has on the whole a wider scope and more ample dominion than painting, being not only able to bring before our minds all the

visible objects of nature, but to impart to the intellect a more extensive range of ideas, and a more distinct knowledge of facts; to exhibit in detail the most subtle workings of the heart and head; to trace the gradual progress of emotion from its faint beginnings, till it becomes uncontrollable passion; and to suspend the feelings between hope and fear, till the interest becomes almost painfully intense, and much exceeds any that painting can excite.

For this greater depth and extent of power she is indebted to an auxiliary and admirable art—a language composed of conventional signs, capable of expressing with more or less correctness whatever the mind of man can conceive; but, as this language differs in different countries, it must be acquired, or translated into our own, before we can understand it, and in such cases may lose much of its original energy and harmony, with perhaps something of its precise meaning. Painting, on the other hand, confined to the representation of visible objects and effects, is able to convey thought and feeling

only as they “testify their hidden residence by look, action, and gesture;” she cannot narrate, but her language, if not always adequate, is nevertheless that of Nature herself, and therefore universal,—intelligible to the learned and the unlearned, subject to no change, and often admitting of still greater force, variety, and ornament, than the flowing numbers and ingenious figures of Poetry herself. Thus, in the power of expressing beauty, character, grace, and dignity, Painting much surpasses her rival, and to this the poets themselves bear witness. Ovid confesses that “but for Apelles Venus would still have remained concealed beneath the waves.”

In the animated and illusive representation of outward appearances, Painting has greatly the advantage; but being confined in every work to a single point of time, all that she can convey of the past, the present, and the future, must be concentrated and compressed into the narrow focus of that *one* moment; a difficulty perhaps exceeding any which the other arts have to encounter.

Notwithstanding, then, the close resemblance of these twin sisters, the difference between painting and poetry is essential and considerable, arising from the different elements in which they move, and the different organs through which they address the mind. Each has her own sphere and potency : the one exists in time, the other in space,—the one, presenting us with shapes and appearances, is instantaneous in her effects,—the other, with expressive sounds in succession, makes deeper impressions by degrees ; but the rich accumulation of treasures which they have mutually bequeathed to the world prove their identity of spirit, and that painting is well characterized as “ mute poetry,” and poetry as “ speaking painting.”

Johnson, in his tale of *Rasselas*, has introduced an eloquent enumeration of the qualities necessary to form a poet ; which, as it is equally applicable to the painter, and accords with my view of the subject, I shall here transcribe, as worthy the consideration of the student :—

“To a poet nothing can be useless. Whatever is beautiful and whatever is dreadful, must be familiar to his imagination; he must be conversant with all that is awfully vast, or elegantly little.

“The plants of the garden, the animals of the woods, the minerals of the earth, and meteors of the sky, must all concur to store his mind with inexhaustible variety; for every idea is useful for the enforcement or decoration of moral or religious truth; and he who knows most will have most power of diversifying his scenes, and gratifying his reader with remote allusions and unexpected instruction.

“But the knowledge of nature is only half the task of a poet; he must be acquainted likewise with all the modes of life: this character requires that he estimate the happiness and misery of every condition; observe the power of all the passions in all their combinations, and trace the changes of the human mind, as they are modified by various institutions, and accidental influences of climate or custom, from the sprightli-

ness of infancy to the decrepitude of old age."

We are not surprised, then, to find Rasselas exclaim,—“ Enough ! thou hast convinced me that no human being can ever be a poet.” And yet, all that Imlac has there stated to be requisite for the poet is equally necessary for the painter, and still leaves much wanting to complete the idea of a consummate artist ; for the latter operating by sensible appearances (of which the eye judges at a glance), whatever he presents to us must be much more accurately detailed, and of course more minutely studied, than is essential for the poet, who, addressing us by another organ which does not admit of the same distinctness, or of any immediate comparison with his subject, and bringing forward his images one after another, may reject whatever is unsuited to his purpose or his powers.

The painter's acquaintance with the structure and surfaces of bodies, their figures and motions, the natural effects and properties of light (and under every variety of perspec-



tive), must therefore be much more intimate and particular; to which he must add a scientific knowledge of the nature, distribution, and harmony of colours (equivalent to that of the musician in regard to sounds), with a constant attention to *definite imitation*; and after all this, he has difficulties of manipulation to encounter perhaps equal to those of a dexterous musical performer, from which the poet is entirely exempt.

If painting, in its inventive and intellectual part, be entirely analogous to poetry, so in its technical conduct, in the harmonious arrangement of its materials, it will be found to bear an equally close relation to music; and with these it combines that mimic faculty peculiarly its own.

The chief advantages, then, which painting possesses over poetry, consist in the universality of its language, and its more effective power in the exhibition of visible objects and qualities; and over music, in its intellectuality and durability; for, if it be the boast of music, that it affords pleasure to hundreds of persons at the same time, it is as transient

as it is fascinating. The fine works of painting remain for the gratification of future ages; while music, to use an expression of Lionardo da Vinci, "expires in the very breath that gives it birth."

So much for my general notion of the art whose elements I have to bring before you. It appears to me, then, that painting may be usefully considered, as it is inventive or poetical, scientific or technical, imitative or practical; for these several qualities or properties must, in various degrees, enter into the construction of every picture, whatever its subject. These divisions of the art I purpose to treat of separately, confining myself at present to the *inventive* part.

Invention has ever been esteemed the highest and most distinguishing attribute of man, as that in which "human power shows likeliest to divine;" though not creative, but founded on previous acquisitions, it is origi-native, and seems to consist in the faculty of discovering and developing novel combinations, extending the boundaries of knowledge, and opening fresh sources of intellec-

tual enjoyment. This is the true province of genius—the great privilege and characteristic of Bacon, Shakspeare, Newton, of Da Vinci, M. Angelo, Raffaele, and all those master-spirits who are born to be the guides of mankind, and throw new light upon the world in art or science. Were my powers of imagination and expression equal to the “height and depth of this great argument,” I might be tempted to expatiate at some length on invention as it relates to our art; but such disquisitions have been introduced here by more competent men, and, considering that genius cannot be communicated perhaps to as great an extent as may be serviceable for the student, my humble aim will be to aid his practical advancement. *Invention* in painting does not necessarily imply giving birth to the original germ of the subject, but consists rather in contriving its treatment as a picture,—in devising an agreeable and interesting composition, by which the story, whencesoever selected, may be best illustrated, and all the qualities of the art compatible with it be brought before

us in the most effective manner: thus, it comprehends not only the choice of the actions, not only the subject, but that of characters, and expressions of the figures, with the scene and accessories belonging to it; the nature of the light and hues which are to envelope and display them; in short, the entire design, or scheme of the work; it is therefore not altogether separable from technical composition, which I shall consider particularly in a future Lecture.

The painter may be indebted to the poet or the historian for his theme, but the invention of the picture, as a whole work, must be as much his own as if it had altogether proceeded from his sole conception, for the most graphic descriptions will scarcely ever place the *circumstances* of a story in such a light as will exactly suit the wants of painting. The story or plôt, if taken from poetry or history, must be translated into another language, and, if I may so express myself, rendered conformable to its idioms; the circumstances must be remoulded in the mind of the artist; the ore

cast afresh ; and no one can do *this* for him, —he *must* in this be his own poet. Subjects have often been recommended to the painter by men of taste and literature, which, however striking or interesting in themselves, afford but little scope for the particular powers and resources of our art—with which, perhaps, artists can alone be thoroughly acquainted.

Many of the most ingenious thoughts and happiest touches of poetry are not transferable to painting ; unless they can be made captivating to the mind by form or tone, and furnish such materials as our art requires—unless reconcileable with her true principles, they do not fairly come within her province, however true to nature. Much has been said by various writers on the subject of *truth*, or, in other words, of what is to be understood by the term *nature*, as applied to works of fiction, and it is obviously of the first importance to the student to acquire just ideas on this head. It has been shown that a rigid adherence to positive truth is neither requisite nor de-

sirable, even in the imitative part of our art;—in the inventive, or poetical part, a much greater latitude is not only allowable but indispensable.

Nature must ever be the painter's text-book; but Painting affects not to be one of the exact sciences: her aim is not to convince the reason or satisfy the intellect, but to excite the imagination, and to bring before us improved representations of whatever is best adapted to interest and give us pleasure in the display of her particular capabilities. For this purpose Nature must be compared with herself, and refined from all that is disagreeable and repulsive; much that we find in individuals must be omitted, when redundant or inappropriate, and added where deficient; the objects we select must be such as are in accordance with their own natures and with ours. "The images of things (as Bacon says of poetry) must be accommodated to the desires of the mind;" and, therefore, their natural interest is to be enhanced in every possible way. They must be reproduced to us less as they *are* than

as we wish to find them, and conformably with those ideas of the perfection of Nature, which she suggests when contemplated in her happiest moods and specimens, collected, refined, and harmonized, as they may be seen in the most admired works of genius.

This was the leading principle of the Greeks (as I shall have occasion to point out more particularly in my next Lecture), and is the basis of *style*.

This is the kind of truth which the best critics concur in laying down as alone proper for the painter. The writings of Reynolds are full of this doctrine, and contain a fund of excellent observations on what is to be considered as “truly nature,” which properly comprehends whatever we are formed to relish and sympathize with; and this is not confined to the real and familiar, but includes whatever is probable or even conceivable—whatever painting can suggest persuasively to the fancy. The maxim just cited from Bacon is in accordance with the well-known precept of Horace, which allows to poets and painters an equal privilege of

departing from mere matter of fact. Indeed, in all works of fiction this is less a license than a duty. They must bear a certain resemblance, and in some respects a close resemblance, to truth ; but it must be selected truth—truth arrayed in Fancy's garb, " Nature to advantage dressed," aggrandized, beautified, and accommodated to our desires.

That these licenses may be carried to an absurd length, there can be no doubt ; but the question of excess is perhaps only to be determined by the power of the artist. Experience has shown that if he be able to impart to the spectator his own conceptions and feelings with vigour and enthusiasm,—if he can take captive the imagination and constrain us to follow him in his flight,—he may " ascend the brightest heaven of invention ;" it matters not how far he leave ordinary truth behind him, or to what strange region he may carry us ; on the contrary, it is then that he will be most effective and delightful to those congenial spirits whom he has succeeded in binding within his spell. The genius of the



painter, like that of the poet, may even call forth new species of beings—an Ariel, a Caliban, or the Midsummer Fairies,—and, “if his charms crack not,” blend them with nature so happily as not to awaken our incredulity,—may lift us out of this “visible diurnal sphere,” and “lap us in Elysium.” Our incredulity, indeed, seems to be the only criterion, whether or not he may have exceeded the ample bounds which taste will sanction. On this point there will, of course, always be a variety of opinion; he will never be equally effective with all men; and it is obvious that, the higher his flight the fewer he must expect to be his followers.

M. Angelo, by common consent, stands at the head of the highest class of inventors in our art, and stands alone. The series of pictures which he has painted in the Sistine Chapel, beginning with the “Creation of Man,” and ending with his “Final Judgment,” display powers of Epic invention, daring conception, and terrible expression, far exceeding in sublimity any other productions that Painting can boast of. These,

and his earlier work, the "Cartoon of Pisa," have already been commented upon in the Lectures of Fuseli, with an ingenuity and eloquence which would render any attempt of mine to enlarge upon the same topic worse than superfluous.

As it would be useless to repeat the remarks of this eminent critic, whose writings are well known to you, I shall simply refer to them as containing much powerful dissertation and instructive criticism on the inventive part of painting. For the same reason, I shall abstain from dilating on the less overwhelming but scarcely less admirable series of pictures by Raffaello, in the Vatican. The nature and excellence of these inventions you may be led to appreciate by the same able commentator. If Raffaello did not so often ride on the "seraph wings of ecstasy," and lift us from the earth like his great rival, he was not second to him in his power over the heart. Fuseli has happily observed, that his genius was essentially dramatic, and that he seems to have selected his subjects for the sake of

the characters and expressions they would afford, rather than for the interest of the story. This is more particularly the case with his larger works, both those in the Stanze, and the Cartoons. The series of Scripture histories in the Loggie, or what are called "Raffaelle's Bible," are less dramatic in their treatment, perhaps from being on a small scale; but in these, as in all his works, we find the same propriety, the same true and graceful reflection of human feelings, for which he was so remarkable. Some of these compositions I shall have occasion to advert to hereafter.

When speaking of dramatic invention, I must not omit to call your attention to the noble work above me, painted from the original of Lionardo da Vinci, by his scholar Marco d'Oggiono, and formerly a decoration of the convent of Carthusians at Pavia. If we may believe those authors who have made careful researches into the history of this the most admired production of one of the most extraordinary men of his own or any age, it was the continued object of his

profound study during a number of years, and it contains in itself ample evidence as to the probability of the fact. The *Cena*, or Last Supper of Our Lord with his Disciples, appears to have been a favourite subject for representation with the early Christians. Lionardo, therefore, had not the merit of originating the story of his picture, though he has thrown into it an animation and soul unrivalled in any other treatment of the event: he has happily selected the most impressive moment of time for his action, when Our Saviour is declaring, "One of you shall betray me." The invention of the whole is simple and pathetic, the characters and expressions varied, dignified, and powerful in the highest degree; its combination of admirable qualities, placing it as decidedly at the head of the dramatic class of painting as "The Last Judgment" of M. Angelo stands supreme in the epic: (the technical merits of this celebrated work it will be my endeavour to point out hereafter). Among the numerous copies of it which were soon spread over France and Italy (and Bossi

mentions more than thirty), there is none, I believe, equal to that which the Royal Academy has the good fortune to possess. The estimation in which "The Last Supper" has been so justly held, is strongly recognized in the homage paid to it by Raffaello himself, who was induced to enter the lists with Lionardo in an elaborate composition on the same event, which has been finely engraved by Marc Antonio. He has adopted the same moment of time; but beautiful and expressive as his design undoubtedly is, it serves to confirm rather than shake our admiration of its great prototype. Almost every class of poetry, as well as the Epic and Dramatic, may find its parallel in Painting. Giulio Romano, Correggio, Poussin, and Rubens, have given us compositions of a highly imaginative character, and embodied many of the beautiful fictions of mythology: Albano has produced a number of graceful works of a lyrical character. The "Aurora" of Guido is an ode. Allegory too (though almost discarded from Poetry), will often furnish the painter with the

means of conveying to the mind a variety of agreeable images and ingenious ideas that could not otherwise be so well expressed, and affords great scope to original invention.

In this particular province of art he has, I conceive, much greater power over our sympathies than the poet. Minerva, the Muses, and other established personifications, may be invested with a degree of beauty, grace, and interest in painting, which poetry can never give them. Rubens has shown that allegory affords unequalled opportunities in the technical part of our art, though he has often perplexed, instead of explaining, his story with those obscure and trivial emblems which he had learned to admire in the school of his master Otho Venius, which were too much the fashion of his time.

The mixture of allegorical and historical personages in his Luxemburg Gallery, it must be confessed, shock us from their incongruity, enveloped as they are in an atmosphere of splendour and pictorial prowess, that almost sets criticism at defiance. But

his picture at Florence, of "Mars rushing out of the Temple of Janus," appears to me entirely free from these objections. He is represented as hurried on by Vengeance and Fury, and trampling on the Arts; Beauty and Love are vainly endeavouring to withhold him, while the Earth follows lamenting, lifting up her hands and eyes to heaven.

The composition is admirable, and sweeps through the canvass with great and appropriate impetus; all the characters are expressive and easily recognized. The invention is simple, ingenious, and consistent throughout, and affords, I think, a happy example of the capabilities of allegorical painting. I am aware of the prejudice which is entertained by a number of modern critics against this class of painting, of which, however, we see fine examples, even of recent production. It has been said that these unreal personages can never affect the feelings; but this is surely not the fact: they may be made beautiful to the eye as well as interesting to the imagination, and therefore afford excellent materials for a picture,

though they might lay less hold upon us in a poem. Yet probably Spenser's long-continued allegories are complained of rather from their want of variety and fatiguing stanza, than from the characters being fictitious, of which we are only reminded now and then by their names.

If the representation be lively and agreeable, and have a sufficient appearance of truth, we do not ask if the persons represented have, or ever had, "a local habitation or a name." In the allegory by Rubens which I have just mentioned, we see a soldier rushing out to battle, and a beautiful female with her children endeavouring to restrain him; they are followed by a matron in an agony of woe; under him are two or three figures thrown down, having in their hands various instruments of art; a mother on her knees, clasping a child in her arms; before him, furies and harpies dragging him on; in the background a town on fire, and a troop of fighting men. Here is little or nothing that is symbolic or doubtful: the circumstances



and characters have a natural hold on our affections, and we may sympathize with the energy and passions which the principal figures display without recollecting that they are allegorical types.

Why should this fine work be less interesting, when we discover that in its abstract meaning (which few will search for) it is an ingenious emblem of war and its effects?

Every one is charmed with Shakspeare's allegory of the "Mermaid singing on the Dolphin's back," and "The Stars that shot madly from their spheres to hear the Sea-maid's music." It is so exquisitely imaginative, so consistent with the fairy scenery and characters among which it is placed, that we are quite content to receive it as a beautiful *picture*, without thinking of Mary Queen of Scots, and the English nobility whom she seduced from their allegiance: a hidden meaning, of which, but for the acuteness of Warburton, we might still be ignorant.

In these instances the allegory pleases chiefly from its picturesque circumstances, and whether the concealed meaning be un-

veiled or not, is of little importance ; it is there for those who seek it, and to them will be an additional gratification.\* At other times the interest may arise more especially from the ingenuity of the thought : of this kind is the following example, mentioned by Du Bos :—

“The Prince de Condé caused the history of his father, the ‘Grand Condé,’ to be painted in the gallery at Chantilly; but that hero having been in his youth opposed to the government, and having performed some of his greatest exploits whilst he bore arms against his country, no display of those could properly be made in such a place. On the other hand, it would have been a great mortification to a son jealous of his father’s glory to omit his most illustrious achievements in a kind of temple which he was raising to his fame. He directed, therefore, Clio, the historical muse, a well-known allegorical personage, to be drawn

\* The Opera is a striking proof how little of Nature will satisfy us, if it possess any striking beauty of whatever kind.

with a book in her hand, on the back of which was inscribed, '*The Life of the Prince de Condé.*' With the other hand she was tearing some leaves out of the book and throwing them on the ground. On these might be read, 'The relief of Cambray,' 'The succour of Valenciennes,' 'The retreat from before Arras,' in short, the titles of almost all the great actions of the prince : thus (says Du Bos) ingeniously perpetuating their memory, while he made a feint of rejecting them." Here the figure of Clio, being made beautiful and expressive, perhaps with a half-suppressed smile, would render a happy device a very agreeable picture.

M. Angelo, Raffaele, Titian, Paolo Veronese, and all the great painters, have occasionally employed their talents on allegory, as allowing more ample scope than any other class of subjects to a poetical imagination. Indeed, allegory affords such opportunities of introducing examples of the highest beauty and the grandest character, with every variety of motion, expression, and picturesque effect—such a rich fund of mate-

rials, intellectual and technical—that it will probably always be the chief resource of monumental as well as ornamental painting on a large scale, in conveying ethical lessons or philosophical truths, combined with classical imagery.

Two allegorical pictures by Correggio, in the collection of the king of France, have been engraved: one represents Man tyrannized over by his passions; the other, Virtue triumphing over Vice. These and the picture by Rubens, which I have just noticed, belong to *unmixed allegory*, which, where too much is attempted, may be somewhat obscure; on the other hand, if mixed with *history*, though it may have the advantage of being more intelligible, unless happily managed, it is apt to be incongruous, at least where ancient and modern persons and circumstances are combined. The allegoric figures of Rome and Fortune, in Poussin's picture of Coriolanus (a fine invention, and as happily commented upon by Fuseli), are quite in keeping with the period to which they belong, and, by infusing into a great

historical event the spirit of poetry, have raised it to the sublime. Necessity, the parent of Invention, has sometimes obliged painters to introduce into pictures *not allegorical* mere hieroglyphics or symbols, solely for the purpose of telling the story; and even these are willingly tolerated, when the work is in other respects a fine one. In that noble composition, "The Delivery of the Keys to Peter," Raffaelle has given it an express meaning, only by the real keys and sheep, which he has adopted to express the metaphorical images of the sacred text,—a conversion of poetical types into realities, in which he has, perhaps, drawn more largely on the intellect and indulgence of the spectator than in any other instance. In one of his beautiful inventions in the Loggie ("Joseph expounding his Dreams to his Brethren") he has represented the dreams within two circles in the air, without which the whole would be unintelligible. But these pretend to be no more than symbols introduced solely to bring the subject to the spectator's

recollection. In another, "Joshua bidding the Sun to stand still," the sun and the moon are also mere hieroglyphics, for Joshua is turning his back on both, though supposed to be in the act of pointing to them,—the light coming in from the right of the picture in front, while the sun is on the left behind.

I do not mention these contrivances as beauties, but to show what has been resorted to in difficult cases, and that, where the merits of the work are great enough to bear them out, the mind assents to almost any degree of license by which it obtains that information which is wanted to make out the painter's meaning; and if that can be rendered clear by a few words upon a scroll or pedestal, or by any similar clue, it adds to the pleasure we receive, as it explains the story and shows the ingenuity of the artist without detracting from the technical merits of the work. In the "Elymas" of Raffaele, he has told the story in so many words, by an inscription on the base of the

proconsul's tribune, where it could not possibly have been, as it records the fact which we see taking place before us.

From the same motive the ancients never scrupled to put the names of their allegorical personages under them, and in this they have been followed by Raffaele and other eminent painters. On medals it was their invariable practice. We find it adopted also in that beautiful marble in the British Museum, the "Apotheosis of Homer." On some of the Herculaneum pictures, and on several of the Greek or Etruscan vases, the names of the persons represented are also inscribed under them ; and it is more than probable that this was the case with the allegorical picture of "Calumny," by Apelles, recorded by Lucian ; and perhaps in the complex type, which Parrhasius drew of the Athenian people, he had recourse to the same expedient. We are apt to smile at this as a clumsy contrivance of the Gothic painters ; but it appears to have been used by the best artists, in the best times, who felt that it was contrary to

the intention of art either to deceive or puzzle the spectator, and were ready to adopt every mode of making it intelligible, technical, and poetical, and interesting, even by stepping out of its strict natural limits for assistance.

I may here advert to a painter of our own country, who employed these artifices to great advantage and with unquestionable propriety,—a painter in whom we may boast of having possessed one of the most original inventors that the art has ever produced: I allude to Hogarth. The richness of his vein, his conceptions of character and truth of expression, all stamp him a true poet, and well entitle him to be mentioned in this division of my subject. In the class of art to which he devoted his powers, and which may be styled in general Low Comedy, he has displayed, with an inexhaustible fund of wit and humour, a dramatic invention not surpassed by Raffaele himself. He has the very high merit also, in the majority of his best works, such as the “Rake’s Progress,” “Marriage à la Mode,” and others, of making



them the vehicles of moral instruction, and lashes with severity the vices and profligacy of his day. By devoting a series of compositions to the same story, and by the variety of ingenious devices he has introduced (which in this style, perhaps, add to the comic effect of his pictures), he has contrived to make them as intelligible as narratives, and has shown such a fertile imagination in his combinations and details, such a knowledge of nature and of art in the scheme and treatment of his subjects, as place him alone in his particular department.

It is to be observed, too, that he has drawn his subjects wholly from his own resources, and is not indebted even for their germs to any other poet. We may congratulate ourselves that *he* at least did not follow the advice which Horace gives to poets, of rather adopting known stories than bringing forward entirely new ones.

The value of this precept, as applicable to our art, would indeed appear to be not a little questionable; for though, in adopting it, the artist's meaning might be more easily

recognized, it would seem to be at the sacrifice of novelty and to the discouragement of originality.

To treat in a new and striking way stories that have been often handled, and must therefore be more or less prescribed or anticipated, is an unequivocal proof of genius; but though taste and science may sometimes supply in technical arrangement and skill what is wanted in original freshness, few subjects can be so rich as to afford many opportunities of varying them with success; some will do only once—some of the finest would probably be excluded, by having been already so admirably treated as to forbid further attempts. Who, for instance, would now undertake the “Last Judgment,” the “Death of Ananias,” or the “Last Supper?”

Some modern critics of this country are for restricting the invention of the artist in another way, and have gone so far as to assert that among us the subjects of painting should be altogether drawn from our native sources, and that a nation so pre-eminent as Britain ought to have a distinct

art of its own; that the subjects and style we admire in the old masters may have belonged properly enough to those countries in which they were produced, but that, if transplanted into ours, they can never flourish, or at least have the flavour of indigenous fruit.

But this partial view of the matter (which, if adopted, would miserably circumscribe the field of art, and fetter all the nobler efforts of the painter) appears to me entirely mistaken and unphilosophical—founded on a narrow conception of the desiderata and intentions of the art. We may, no doubt, be more deeply interested by the most ordinary circumstances connected with self—the most trivial concerns of domestic life—than by the rarest productions of genius. The coarsest portrait of a valued friend may give us more real pleasure than the finest picture of a stranger by Vandyke himself: our personal ties and affections will always bid defiance to any rivalry from art; but works of fiction do not pretend to vie with realities,—their aim is to give an

agreeable stimulus to our imaginations or affections, by reproducing to our notice whatever is permanently grand, beautiful, emphatic, or expressive in our observations and conceptions of nature, wherever it may be found.

Such are the qualities we admire in the most celebrated works of art ; the real excellence of which is to be estimated, not by the transitory gratification they may afford us from present fashions or personal ties, but by the aggregate approbation of enlightened minds in different times and countries, which has passed on them a verdict, that they are truly and happily drawn from universal nature.

Hamlet and Othello engage our sympathy as strongly as if they had been born in England, because they are faithful and impassioned pictures of *man*, who is essentially everywhere the same.

Every country may have its native or popular style ; but high art, like truth, is limited to no country, is independent of

local associations, and belongs to all periods and climes.

The author of a really fine work of fiction contributes to the delight of his species, and is a valuable denizen of the civilized world: such are Homer and Raffaele to be considered; such is Shakspeare, whom the Germans at this day challenge as belonging to them, no less than to us, from the pleasure he affords them; such are Scott and Molière.

Let us not then attempt to tether Painting within the narrow circle of our own sorry homestead,—a noble courser that was meant to range and expatiate freely through all the realms of Fancy.

It is clear that, were we to admit the absurd restriction alluded to, we should exclude some of the best sources of invention, for it may be observed that the selection of the subject from some distance (either of time or space) affords in itself an important advantage, by giving more latitude to the imagination. We see too much into the detail

of what is close to us, the fancy is checked by familiarity; while, on the other hand, our being freed from homely and trivial considerations, is perhaps one cause of the powerful impression produced by the great Epic poets and painters. In their elevated sphere, the artist is not contradicted by the too intimate knowledge of the observer, who is drawn out of himself. No one who appreciates the marvellous display of energy and passion in the "Last Judgment," thinks for a moment of the every-day nature to which he is accustomed; he is altogether absorbed in the terror and sublimity of the scene before him, as by a stupendous and overpowering vision.

Even in subjects of a less aspiring kind, by copying too closely our own accidental habits and manners, we always lose in that permanent interest which belongs to the best productions of the pencil. The admirable genius of Hogarth will hardly preserve his works from gradually becoming as uncouth to his own countrymen as they have always been to foreigners, from the

strangeness and coarseness of their materials ; while those of Raffaele will probably retain their power over cultivated minds as long as taste exists, and human feelings continue in their accustomed course.

The foregoing remarks have been drawn chiefly from poetry, but they are applicable in no inconsiderable degree to subjects selected from history, which must also be moulded more or less to the demands of art, by the invention of the painter, or they will fail to affect us with pleasure. In historical subjects, however, attention is required to the costume of the time and country to which they belong, even though that should be unpleasing in itself ; and perhaps this necessity, and the unpicturesque forms of modern habiliments, may be one cause why recent history has been so little attempted, and interests so little when it is. There is some risk of its becoming ludicrous even in the painter's lifetime, merely from a change in the fashions of the day.

So much was this felt when West undertook to paint the " Death of General Wolfe,"

that he hesitated at first whether he should not clothe his figures in the Roman costume, to avoid the awkwardness of the regimental uniforms and military accoutrements of the period. And our great painter and sagacious critic, Sir J. Reynolds, is said to have advised him to adopt that course, conceiving it to be necessary, in order to support the dignity of the subject. West, however, concluded that, by so great a sacrifice of known truth, his picture would lose more in character and popular attraction than it could gain by the introduction of classical instead of English dresses; and his success amply justified the choice he finally made.

The masterly work he produced on that occasion will always be interesting to the antiquary from its faithful details, and to the admirers of art, from the skill displayed in the composition. Nevertheless, though as well managed in this respect as due attention to matter of fact would permit, the repulsive character of the costume, which he could not entirely overcome,



must, I think, always detract something from our entire satisfaction with it as a picture.

We see, then, what description of subjects is calculated to maintain a wide and lasting interest with mankind, and what are those which, if more popular in their day, are likely to prove more transient. The painter, however, who justly appreciates the extensive capabilities and almost unlimited range of his art, will not hesitate to exercise his inventive powers in whatever direction fancy may prompt him,—in that direction only can he do justice to his natural gifts, and hope to meet with success: *every* work will find its class of admirers in congenial minds, whether that be limited or extensive. We have a right to expect some portion of the spirit of *Poetry*, though small or inactive, to be latent in the breast of men in general, and *this* it is the especial purpose of the imaginative arts to awaken and elicit; *this* is that faculty, otherwise called *taste*, by which we perceive and relish the beautiful and poetical of whatever is most impressive

and happily characteristic in art or nature. As natural *taste* should be inherent to a more than ordinary extent in the artist,—for it is the native germ of future excellence, which, though it may be developed and perfected, cannot be wholly supplied by culture,—so, in a minor degree, it is no less indispensable in those to whom works of art are addressed. These are produced only in the expectation that they will meet with an echo in the breast of the spectator, responsive to the feelings of the artist. “Without fine nerves, a bosom nicely warmed, an eye, an ear, a fancy to be charmed,” in those who are thus appealed to, the efforts of the greatest genius must be exerted in vain.

I have now pointed out the principal modes of invention, and adverted briefly to the more intellectual properties of the art; I have endeavoured especially to draw the attention of the students to the connexion of Painting with Poetry, believing that a poetical feeling should be intermingled to the utmost possible extent in all its productions of whatever class, as alone giving to

them that zest and preservative quality which should belong to so refined and elevated an art. As far as its own peculiar demands will admit, a picture should be conceived like a poem, and treated as a piece of music; and I trust that I shall be borne out in the views I have taken, as I proceed and adduce the opinions and examples of the most intelligent critics and the most esteemed painters.

These leading considerations being more or less connected with every division of my subject, particularly with that of Composition, I shall have frequent occasion to revert to them in my succeeding Lectures.

I shall conclude this Introductory Address with some general advice to the student who is beginning his career.

He will of course make himself acquainted as early as possible with the valuable Lectures and Discourses which have at various times been delivered from this place. These form in themselves an admirable code of instruction, which will lead him to form a just estimate of what is truly *nature*, as

well as of the limits and capabilities of his art. This he should regard as a sort of patrimony; and I cannot here forbear reminding the young artist of an useful admonition of Sir Joshua Reynolds, that, in the earlier stages of his study, he should implicitly adopt and follow his master's rules, as if they were infallible.

Docility is one of the first moral requisites in any one who would become a painter; it is almost as necessary, indeed, as taste, memory, and imagination. Of this invaluable disposition and its happy effects, we have a persuasive example in Raffaello himself. Whatever the student's genius, he must be content for some time to travel in the beaten track; with this it is his business to become thoroughly acquainted, were it only to enable him, in a more advanced state, to deviate from it with the greater security; and I feel it right to caution him seriously against supposing that a desultory or slovenly course of study will ever lead to a favourable result,—he cannot be too careful and elaborate in his early efforts; it is the

shortest, or rather the only, road to excellence. If he refer to the example of the great artists, he will perceive them to have been indefatigable in the prosecution of their studies,—the extent and variety of their acquisitions, indeed, seem hardly credible in this “our laggard age.”

While he is daily and assiduously striving to perfect himself in the imitative part of the art, he should store his mind with all the general as well as critical and technical knowledge he is able to acquire, making himself acquainted with the collection of prints and other valuable works in the library, and extending his view, by degrees, to every school and age.

There is no species of information which he may not, at some time or other, bring to bear with advantage on his own comprehensive art; and the more he enlarges the sphere of his ideas, the better qualified will he be to make researches in the inexhaustible storehouse of Nature, and the ampler range will his invention be enabled to take.

The respected authority I have just

quoted, asserts that "ours is not an art of inspiration;" and the doctrine, as addressed to the student, is highly laudable and encouraging, more especially as coming from one whose genius few will be disposed to question. Yet I am afraid that, without some natural predisposition (by whatever name it may be called), some more than ordinary faculties, nothing very considerable can ever be achieved in art; science will be insipid without deep feeling and a degree of enthusiasm, which are other words for genius, and feeling will be ineffective without science. The nature of that rare attribute, Genius, which is supposed to be anterior to, or independent of, all culture, is not yet very well agreed upon; the strongest claims to it are often disputed while the aspirant is living, and are not always settled even by impartial posterity. Let not the student, however, despair, who does not perceive himself to be thus endowed, but rather let him urge his powers, whatever they may be, yet more strenuously; nor let the student who fancies himself possessed of

this high gift, relax in his industry and application.

Lionardo considered it a good sign if an artist was *dissatisfied* with his productions, because it shewed that his conceptions went beyond his present ability, which longer study and practice would doubtless evolve; and, on the contrary, that his being satisfied at once, proved the work to be too profound for his comprehension.

In the opinion of Michael Angelo, even Raffaele owed more of his excellence to unwearied diligence than to his natural gifts; and the genius of our sublime Milton is compared by Pope to a furnace kept at an intense heat by extraordinary *art*. If we can persuade ourselves that such as *these* were not endowed beyond the ordinary race of men, we may well believe with Newton and Reynolds, that nothing is denied to patient and well-directed labour.

However this may be, a just conception of the extensive demands of our art will convince us that a life of application and unremitted study must be the lot of all who

wish to arrive at any great proficiency in painting. M. Angelo, at the age of eighty, declared that he was still learning !

- I hope the student will not think that it is my wish to overwhelm him with a needless accumulation of difficulties : I have not intentionally exaggerated any ; but, in this general view of the art, I am anxious to omit nothing that may help to awaken his enthusiasm and stimulate his exertions, and to show the necessity of cultivating his mind and heart no less than his hand, convinced as I am that a great artist can only be reared on the foundation of sound moral principles and a literate education. I would recommend him particularly to familiarize himself with all the finest productions of Poetry and the noblest traits of History, of every age.

These studies will awaken his fancy, prompt and sustain his invention, and perhaps qualify him to emulate those great masters of our art who have achieved undying honour for themselves, and bequeathed such illustrious examples to their successors.



## LECTURE II.

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DESIGN.

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MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,—

HAVING noticed the relations of painting to the other liberal arts, and briefly considered its intellectual and inventive capabilities, I proceed to speak of the technical elements by which it operates: *form*, *chiaroscuro*, and *colour*, by whose aid the painter is enabled to effect his imitations, embody his conceptions, and bring before us the whole scope and power of the art. The distinguishing and permanent characters of objects are most conspicuous in their forms, and hence *Design*, or Drawing (which is the power of defining forms with taste and accuracy), has always been esteemed the true basis on which Painting should be

founded. It has, therefore, the earliest and strongest claim on the student's attention.

In the technical use of the term, *drawing* is more especially applied to the delineation of the human figure, an adequate knowledge of which is the first and chief desideratum of art. It has been said, that "the proper study of mankind is man;" and this dictum, at least with regard to his physical qualities, is even more applicable to the painter than to the poet or philosopher. The best commentary on the structure and symmetry of the human figure is to be found in the remains of Ancient Sculpture; these, by universal consent, still supply the finest examples of form, and are in all academies placed before the student, besides being the most difficult as the safest guides in teaching him *how to look at Nature*, and opening his mind to the value of *style*. The meaning of the term I shall now endeavour to explain. Gifted with a spirit of investigation, as well as a perception of the Beautiful, beyond any other people, the Greeks adopted, as a fundamental maxim, that imitative Art

should *refine* upon ordinary Nature, divest her of all that is coarse and repulsive, contemplate her under her most favourable aspects, and even strive to enhance her attractions, and elevate her to the desires and conceptions of the mind. Setting out on this principle, they aimed at representing Man, not as he is too often seen—disfigured by accident, disease, or habits, but as he appears on a wide and *collective* survey. Perceiving that no individual possessed in himself all the perfections that were to be met with in others of the same class; that one seemed redundant, another deficient, either in some of its proportions, or in the symmetry of its various parts; they concluded that the true generic character of Man was to be found in the centre of these diversities, and to be estimated from an average of those essential qualities which are seen distributed in different degrees throughout the species; and by selecting only the most complete models, and combining the various graces, they sought to arrive at a degree of beauty strictly natural,

though not existing, perhaps, in any single specimen of Nature herself, and thus restore her to that original perfection, the elements of which they seemed everywhere to trace.

In pursuing these philosophical inquiries, they were singularly aided by the institutions, habits, and climate of their favoured country. The Beautiful was not only recognized and sought after as the highest excellence in Art, but they endeavoured to make Art re-act upon Nature, and improve the race in its germ.

Their pregnant women were brought to gaze upon the finest statues, in the hope that their imaginations being in that excited state and strongly impressed with ideas of beauty, a correspondent effect would probably be produced in the forms of their offspring. Public competitions were also instituted in various parts of Greece, where prizes were awarded to the most beautiful of both sexes, according to the verdict of the painters and sculptors. These contests must occasionally have brought before them examples of all that was eminently perfect ; and the daily exercise

of their youth in the Gymnasia afforded better opportunities of becoming acquainted with the human form, in action and repose, than have ever occurred to artists since.

Fortunately for us, they availed themselves effectually of all those advantages, and, by profound investigation, gradually discovered that refined mode of treating the human figure in its various classes, which is called *Style*. Thus trained, Polycletus produced his celebrated *Doryphorus*, which was considered so perfect a standard of the true proportions and symmetry of man, that it was called the *canon*, or rule ; and is said to have been followed as such by all the succeeding sculptors of antiquity. But their efforts ended not here. Prompted by that aspiration after the sublime and beautiful which distinguishes and dignifies Grecian art ; and desirous of giving the greatest stimulus to their religious worship : they strove, by refining on the most admirable collated specimens of our nature, by omitting every thing unessential or degrading, and developing still more what seemed to aggrandize

and ennoble ; by simplifying the forms and bringing them a little nearer, perhaps, to those geometrical types on which they appear to be founded ; by perfecting the symmetry of the proportions and the harmony of the lines ; they spiritualized man, invested him with *ideal beauty*, and exalted the Human into an emblem of the Divine.

On this foundation arose the Jupiter and Minerva of Phidias, the Juno of Polycletus, the Venus of Praxiteles, and many other masterpieces of Art, which, unhappily, we can now estimate only from the celebrity they achieved in that enlightened nation of philosophers and critics ; but the Belvidere Apollo, though produced at a later and less favourable period, is alone sufficient to explain and justify their theory, and to convince us of their power of raising our ideas above humanity, in the representation of celestial natures.

What Pliny relates of Zeuxis, that he employed five different models for his "Helen," in order to compare, select, and combine their several beauties, was probably the

practice of all the great painters of antiquity (the same, at least, is attributed to Apelles), and is a proof that they concurred in the system of the sculptors.

When our great philosopher Bacon derides this system, he seems to have forgotten his own precept with regard to poetry (which I had occasion to cite in my first Lecture, as equally applicable to the graphic arts), that "it accommodates the images of things to the desires of the mind ;" for, with all deference to this pre-eminent man, it is the very principle on which the Greek artists proceeded so successfully.

Zeuxis can never be supposed, in studying his "Helen" from so many different females, to have aimed at making up a fanciful, incongruous something, neither existing nor possible in nature; he had no doubt chosen them from that class of forms to which he considered Helen to belong, with the intention of comparing and blending in his work those several but homogeneous beauties which were more developed in one individual than in another. The general conception

of what was essential to the character, he had doubtless formed, from his previous observation of what Nature partially displays in her best specimens, and he referred to her individually, to confirm or correct his knowledge ; after which, he no doubt still refined on all these models, harmonized their varieties, and raised his work into poetry (without which he could not have produced a "Helen"), by giving her that *ideal* perfection which Nature herself suggested.

The *beau-ideal* is so little known or felt among us, that the term, though not unfrequently used, is perhaps scarcely understood; I believe, in the present day, many think it has nothing to do with nature, but means something merely imaginary.

The vulgar error of supposing that nothing can be *natural* but what is drawn from an individual type, though it has been so repeatedly exposed, is apt to start up again, and hence it should be our constant care that we understand the term "nature" aright. The casual particularities of our model are so many deviations from *nature* ; while the



theory of the ancients, had it not been well founded on nature, could not have led to the production of works so universally admired, nor have stood, as it has done, the test of ages. We often hear art reproached with being conventional, as if that were not reconcileable with truth; but we should remember that art must be in some degree conventional, for, if it proceed not on any rules or established principles, it is not art, but merely experiment.

*Style* is *Nature* rectified by her own true and permanent standard, and restored to her original perfection; it is based on sound philosophy, and is not only applicable but essential to all the imaginative arts, and, when supported and informed by taste and feeling, can never fail to please. The *beau-ideal* is nature, *par excellence*.

Beauty, I have observed, was considered by the Greeks as the true aim and attribute of fine art. The examples they have left (though few of their most celebrated works have come down to us) throw more light on this subject than is to be found elsewhere,

and prove how well they understood its principles.

No quality, perhaps, has ever been more extensively discussed than that of the Beautiful; and few with less satisfactory results. It has been ascribed to every thing that delights us: fitness, propriety, harmony, perfection. Some have believed it to consist entirely in mental associations, deny it to be inherent in objects themselves, and assert that it exists only in the feelings of the beholder.

I shall not attempt to investigate this metaphysical mystery,—each of these opinions may be worthy of the student's examination, as all may be concerned in the problem; but the beauty we have to do with—the object of design—is that which is expressed by *form*; and it will be difficult, I think, to convince those whose professional studies render them most conversant with a great variety of forms, that some of these are not more agreeable than others in their natural effect upon the eye, without reference to any associations of the mind, as

certain sounds confessedly are to the ear; and hence a consideration of what appears to be the *abstract* value of *forms*, and the preferability of one to another, from whatever cause it may arise, deserves to occupy no slight portion of the artist's attention.

Many fanciful reasons have been assigned for considering the sphere or circle as the most perfect of figures.

Dr. Darwin attributes our love of this form to the recollection of the maternal breast which sustained us in infancy; others, to its being the form of the world we inhabit. But without disputing these associations (which perhaps seldom, if ever, enter an artist's mind when looking at that form), the *sphere* displays, in its ever-varying yet uniform contour, the most complete harmony, with a rich diversity of chiaroscuro, under every circumstance of illumination, combining that agreeable impression on the sense, with a feeling of perfection in the mind, which Mengs thought to be included in the painter's idea of beauty.

It may be observed, too, that there seems

to be a particular fitness in that shape to be received through the circular aperture of the eye, and ovals, spirals, lines principally converging (and which prevail in all beautiful compositions of form), may, perhaps, be agreeable to us, from a similar adaptation to the organ of vision. Even the *entasis*, or swell in the outline of a column, which is a slight approach towards the concentric, may please from the same physical cause, and account for its adoption; while, on the contrary, eccentric curves opposed to each other, have always a harsh and discordant effect, and are shunned by the best designers.

Of rectilinear forms, the most simple, such as the square and the triangle, are the most effective: these are suited to subjects of a grand or severe character; and that they help to impress correspondent feelings (whether from association or some hidden virtue), the noble productions of Architecture seem to prove.

All theories admit *proportion* to be an essential constituent of beauty.

Proportion, indeed, seems to be a primary and universal *law*, not confined to forms, but the occult regulator of all the quantities and subdivisions of nature; hitherto, perhaps, better understood in the divisions and harmony of the musical scale than in any other element. Unless on the supposition that it contains in itself some inherent but unexplained charm, I know not how to account for the satisfaction afforded us by the proportions of some architectural mouldings and compartments, in preference to others, where no mental associations can be readily shown to exist. It is connected with the mystery of numbers, and is, perhaps, the principle of Harmony itself.

Pamphilus, when he recommended the study of Arithmetic to his scholars, may have meant to inculcate the science of Proportion. At any rate, the Greeks must have been thoroughly aware of its importance, as their works abundantly show. The relative proportions of the human figure, as adopted by the ancients, have been partly preserved by Vitruvius; and many of the moderns have

proposed other and more elaborate systems, derived from their observations of Nature and Art. These proportions seem to be founded on geometrical principles. Thus, the height of the figure from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, you are aware, is equal to the extreme width of the arms extended horizontally,—i.e. from the tips of the fingers of one hand to those of the other,—involving the principle of the square. If the arms are raised above the head obliquely, and the legs widely separated, the limbs become radii of a circle, of which the navel is the centre; the breadth of the figure is about a fourth of its height, on which I need not here enlarge.

With these and other proportions, as they have been laid down by the best masters, and as they are to be found in the Greek statues, it is expedient for the student to be acquainted; they will assist him materially in understanding the human figure, and its symmetry; but afterwards, in the practice of his art, he will do well to follow the

precept of M. Angelo, and rely more upon his eye and feeling than on the compass.

To do this safely, he must become thoroughly sensible of the characteristic appearances of both sexes ; the ample shoulders, narrower loins, muscular limbs, and greater height of the male ; and the more rounded, delicate, and undulating contours of the female ; the dignity and beauty of both in action, or at rest ; together with that grace which

“ The hand that formed them on their shape hath poured ; ”—

and still more especially, “ the human face divine ” must be the object of his unre-mitted study, wherein Nature seems to have collected all her resources to gratify the mind and heart.

In the female face are assembled the most exquisite proportions, with every possible diversity of curvature, line, and surface,—the extremes of contrast with the most perfect harmony. The eyebrows,

eyes, and mouth range at right angles with the nose, a fixed and central feature, blending into the forehead above, and projecting below; narrower at the point, and gently spreading at the nostrils; the concave recesses in which the eyes are sheltered are opposed to the convex brow and cheek-bone,—the breadth of forehead and cheeks, to the smaller features,—the circular eyeballs, enshrined in oval orbits, sometimes flashing with unrivalled brilliance, sometimes more or less veiled by their moveable lids, edged with a silken fringe,—the flexible and finely-moulded lips, alternately closed, or separated, or decked with a wreathed smile, occasionally revealing the double row of ivory teeth,—the hollow beneath the mouth, suddenly contrasted by the rounded and tapering chin: the whole circumscribed and united by an oval contour, displaying in a small compass, a variety, fluency, and entireness of form, to be found in no other object.

The face, besides being a school of symmetry, is also the chief seat of expression,



an index to the emotions of the soul ; and if we take into the account the unrivalled chiaroscuro of the eyes, and those celestial hues which are peculiarly its own, with its decoration of curled or flowing hair, it may be said to exhibit a concentration of all that is beautiful. Were a similar analysis extended to the body and limbs, we should find a correspondent and not less wonderful variety and harmony pervading our whole structure.

The Greeks had acquired so thorough a knowledge of the human form and its essential principles, that in the coarsest specimens extant of their sculpture, the general proportions are usually good, and at least seem grounded on a correct theory, while among the moderns, it is remarkable how much celebrated artists have varied from each other, and from themselves at different times, in regard even to the bulk, and general forms of their figures.

The Greek heroes are represented of a taller proportion than those of the Romans ; as we may see in the Metopes and statues of

the Parthenon, in the Meleager, and in the outlines on their painted vases, as compared with the Antinous, and the relievos of the arches of Trajan and Titus; a difference probably found in the forms generally presented to the observation of the sculptor in each country; or it may have arisen partly from the more poetical feeling of the Greeks, and their wish to aggrandize nature. Zeuxis is said to have made even his females large and majestic (in accordance with Homer), and such is their general character on the fictile vases. The forms of M. Angelo, if we may trust San Gallo's copy, at Holkham, of the celebrated cartoon of Pisa (which has every appearance of great accuracy), were at first slender. This is confirmed by Marc Antonio's engraving from one of the groups in that composition (in the drawing of which he is supposed to have been assisted by Raffaello), and it is observable also in his *Pietà*, *Bacchus*, and all his earlier works. In the meridian of his powers, when he painted the ceiling of the *Capella Sistina*, he displayed

the most perfect style of design that has ever been attained by the moderns.

His "Adam animated by the Deity" is of a noble proportion, and the true mean between excess and deficiency; but his figures afterwards became more heavy, and in some of his later productions even gross.

The figure of Lazarus, in the National Gallery, originally drawn by him, is one of the finest specimens of *style* in drawing which our country can boast of possessing.

Raffaello set out with the meagre forms of his master Perugino, on which his natural taste and constant attention to nature led him gradually to enlarge; and upon seeing the works of M. Angelo in the Vatican, he at once adopted the grander style which is to be found in his subsequent productions. Some of the figures in the cartoons appear sufficiently bulky, but in the Farnesina he has fallen into decided clumsiness. Such instances (and I might add others, even among those who were best acquainted with style) shew the necessity of watchfulness,

lest in seeking grandeur we fall into caricature, and that it is necessary, even for the ablest and most experienced artists, to keep the best examples always in mind.

The style of Annibal Caracci, in the Farnese Gallery, is heavier than that of the antique, and comparatively vulgar, but always displays a great practical knowledge of the human frame, and a power of drawing; which, indeed, belongs, more or less, to all the well-trained artists of that school:\* this is generally characterized as the *academic* style, which long prevailed on the Continent. The drawing of Lodovico Caracci and Guido is more refined, and often very pure and expressive—that of Domenichino very perfect, but less animated. Poussin, amongst all the moderns, best conceived the generic style of the ancients, and learned to see it in his model; he sometimes reached considerable elegance and dignity; but, perhaps, rarely, if ever, the beautiful. Though the purest, and even the most ideal designer (after

\* This may be seen in two of the original cartoons for this work, now in the National Gallery.

M. Angelo), he studied all his figures from individual nature, as we may see by a number of his painted sketches from the living model, which still remain; and his example is strongly to be recommended.

As often as we observe in Nature beauty and grandeur of form, I am persuaded that we shall invariably find them in unison with the system of the Greeks; which the student, therefore, like Poussin, should labour thoroughly to acquire, that he may know how to study from casual models, without being misled. I would not be misunderstood, as advising him to follow the style of the antique rigidly and implicitly, on every or any occasion; in some subjects, it would obviously be absurd. The French school were seduced by their admiration of the antique, about fifty years ago, into great pedantry and dryness; and, not being good colourists, lost sight of nature, and produced merely painted statues.

Painting neither requires nor admits of the same severe attention to forms as sculpture; in the latter, they constitute the

whole art: in painting, though the most important, they are still but a part of it, and demand a different treatment: the elements of style, however, are the same in both arts, and can nowhere be so advantageously studied as in the works of the ancients. Witness the prodigious diversity which they succeeded in giving to their deities of heaven and hell, of earth and sea; their allegorical personifications, their nymphs, fauns, satyrs, scenic masks, and monsters; on all of which they stamped a distinct, poetical character, ranging from the grotesque to the sublime, without departing from their system, or losing sight of nature.

With this rich mine, the historical or poetical painter cannot be too familiar. He will find it amply repay his severest labour, and furnish him with hints of the most valuable kind. What Gibbon said of the Greek language is equally true of Greek art: that it could give a soul to the objects of sense, and a body to the abstractions of philosophy.

In endeavouring to attain a competent knowledge of the human form and become a good designer, the student will find it indispensably necessary to make himself well acquainted with the auxiliary sciences of anatomy and perspective. The first will always afford him a clue to the general proportions and symmetry of the figure; the skeleton will explain the permanent forms of the joints and bony parts, and an acquaintance with the attachments, shapes, and offices of at least the exterior muscles, will much facilitate his intelligence of those changes which are so constantly taking place in their appearance.

Without perspective he will not be able to draw any object with truth, or to give it its proper place. Even the correct foreshortening of a limb, and still more that of a whole figure, implies a considerable knowledge of this science.

Albert Durer, in his treatise on Symmetry, has laid down diagrams for this purpose, though I do not conceive that they will be found of any advantage to the

student, whose eye, when properly trained, should be his chief guide.

But this work may be pointed out as a singular example how far the eye of a man of rare genius and knowledge may be misled from nature by the use of ill-adapted models ; the individuals he has employed for that purpose are of so meagre and repulsive a character, that his forms offend in an opposite extreme from the want of style, as much as the exaggerated productions of Goltzius and Spranger do by their abuse of it.

Next to the forms and proportions of the human figure, the student should make himself master of the powers of motion and natural balance. Much useful instruction on this subject may be found in the works of Da Vinci, Flaxman, and others ; and much may be derived from the valuable demonstrations of our learned professor of anatomy ; but a persevering study of Nature herself, alone can teach us the infinite variety of action of which the human machine is capable.



All motion proceeds from an alteration in the balance of the parts of a body round its centre of gravity, as that changes with respect to its basis of support. By these alterations, certain muscles are immediately brought into exertion, to place the limbs in such positions as are necessary to sustain the figure; these again are soon relaxed, and others employed to carry on the action, or vary the attitude. In violent exercises, or sudden efforts, the utmost extent of anatomical capability is often called for; and the poise and shape of the figure changed with a rapidity and diversity truly wonderful.

To preserve in every case the requisite balance, and to represent with truth and character the relative degree of muscular exertion necessary to each and all the parts, is one of the greatest tests of the artist's skill, and may be justly considered as a main instrument of expression in painting; for whatever passion or meaning may be conveyed in the face, unless accompanied with consistent motions and gestures, and a due

equipoise of the figure, the intention will necessarily be contradicted and destroyed.

It is this evident unity of purpose, and the accordance of every part (even to the fingers and toes) with the expression of the countenance, that gives such a natural and captivating effect to the works of Raffaele; as it was a still more profound knowledge of the construction and powers of the human frame, that enabled M. Angelo to delineate every diversity of action and position of which it is capable, with an energy of feeling and character peculiarly his own.

Correggio, though he had a much less intimate acquaintance with the figure, and did not excel as a draughtsman, has, however, in his large compositions, ventured on the boldest foreshortenings, availing himself of small models, made expressly for him, which he suspended in the air and copied. These contrivances may assist those who have science enough to employ them safely; but must be used with a cautious attention to perspective.

Rubens, on the other hand, possessed a

thorough knowledge of the anatomical structure of the human figure, and thence derived his extraordinary facility in invention and composition. It was this which enabled him to give the reins to his vigorous imagination in its most aspiring flights ; although from deficiency of taste, his personages are often so coarse (not to say brutal), that in spite of their daring energy, they never excite any feeling of the sublime, at which, in many instances he aimed ; they want spirituality.

No painter proves the value of style by its absence more than Rubens. To express in the outward form the internal workings of the mind of man, is the legitimate and principal effort of the painter ; a knowledge of the effects of each on the other should be his constant and especial aim.

But I proceed to expression of countenance. With the Greeks, as I have shewn, beauty was the paramount principle in art. Feeling it to be that quality, of all others, which most permanently delights us, they were careful never to abandon it altogether, even in works which required

grand or terrific character, and strong expression; some of the moderns have in consequence thought them deficient in the latter important property of the art.

But this is true only with respect to their treatment of certain general subjects, where expression was not called for. In a chorus of nymphs, for instance, the ancients never aimed at more than a placid cheerfulness, and that sisterly likeness remarked by Ovid. In such representations, discrimination of character, or force of expression, would have been out of place; the intention of the artist was to personify the deities of streams or groves, as gentle beings, possessed of more than human beauty, with less than human passion. They were not intended to be dramatic. The poets seem to have adopted their ideas of these divinities from the painters and sculptors, to whose representations they often refer. In the Muses, we find the particular sentiment which belongs to each more developed, though an imperturbed beauty still predominates, expressive of the refined and tranquil pleasure

attending the cultivation of art and science; but in that noble composition in alto-relievo, of the "Destruction of the Children of Niobe" (which may be seen on the staircase), though its beauty is almost lost in the badness of the copy which has come down to us, every figure in its action and gesture is eminently expressive. In the group, as it is called, of the same subject at Florence, of which the Academy is so fortunate as to possess casts, a variety of powerful expression is also exhibited in the highest perfection. In Niobe herself, we see intensity of anguish, combined with the most exquisite forms; and her beauty, instead of being impaired by this union, is exalted to sublimity. I am adverting here rather to the marble bust of Niobe, in the possession of Lord Yarborough (an antique duplicate of that at Florence), which appears to me in this respect an unrivalled work of art.

Were the grief of the Laocoon more violent than it is, we should lose that dignified mental struggle with his fate, which approaches to the sublime, and moves our

pity far more than the contortions of feature which appear in some of the works of Andrea Mantegna, true as those are to the ordinary expression of excessive passion. Excessive passion soon becomes ugly and repulsive. The true aim of art, is "not to harrow up the soul," but to excite our sympathy, which cannot co-exist with pain or distaste.

This very able master has fallen into the error, against which Hamlet cautions the actor, of "tearing his passion to rags," and was not aware that "in the very torrent, tempest, and whirlwind of his passion, he should beget a temperance that may give it smoothness;" a precept of our great poet no less applicable to painting than to the drama. The mind is to be agreeably stimulated, not irritated or offended.

The expressions in M. Angelo's "Last Judgment" are terrific and sublime beyond any thing in Painting, but he has avoided the vicious extreme of Mantegna, and proved how well style and expression may be combined.

The changes of countenance and of form which shew the workings of the soul, are partly instinctive; and consequently more violent and unrestrained, as man is found in a condition less removed from that of the savage. In a refined state of society they are modified or disguised by education, rank, or station; they are varied and influenced in all cases by individual character and temperament.

The effect of these modifications is so great, that no artist can succeed in this difficult, but most interesting quality of art, who has not deeply studied them in nature, and from those painters and poets who have best reflected her in their productions; but to do this, the artist must be gifted with a natural susceptibility which study cannot impart; he must feel strongly and thoroughly identify himself with his subject, or he cannot hope to excite similar feeling in others.

The more obvious features of anger, fear, hope, joy, hatred, have been given by Le Brun, and are probably known to you all. They are coarse and general, and therefore in-

trinsically of little worth, but may be useful as landmarks to beginners. Valuable hints may be derived on this subject (as well as on every other relating to art) from the precepts of Da Vinci, and still more from the examples in his admirable *Cena*. The expressive heads which he has introduced in this unique work, are, we know, diligently selected from nature; but they are refined and aggrandized by style, regulated by poetical propriety, and animated by the impassioned feelings differently excited in each individual by the circumstances of the event. Surprise, astonishment, indignation, intense affliction, hypocritical calmness, sublime sorrow, are here brought together in such a chain of modulated passion as cannot, I believe, be paralleled in any single picture. These feelings are displayed, not merely in the countenance, but in the balance of the body, turn of the head, actions of the hands, and every slightest gesture of the figure; and hence they appear to live.

The works of Raffaele abound in fine specimens of this great power of communi-



cating passion, and of displaying the emotions of the soul in the countenance, as we may see in the Cartoons around us. In the combination of expression with character, he is only surpassed in the "Last Supper" of Da Vinci, and some of the mighty productions of M. Angelo. No other artist has given the world so many and such varied examples of a true and appropriate sentiment in the several actors of his drama, and it is from this cause that none has maintained so strong a hold on the sympathies of mankind.

Expression always implies, or is accompanied with, some approach to *Character*, or *Physiognomy*, which is an habitual cast of countenance derived, partly from original conformation, partly from the frequent exercise of the muscles of the face in the same expressions, the traces of which at length become strongly indicative of the temperament and moral feelings of the individual, and are therefore highly necessary particulars of study for the historical painter.

Beauty is felt in undulating lines and harmonious proportions, while character, which may be considered its antagonist, depends on a more decided opposition of lines, and more angular forms: the greater the energy and distinctness required by the subject, the more direct and positive this contrast must be. Hence beauty has been happily called centripetal, and character centrifugal.

Character and beauty, however, may be combined in various degrees; but in the system of the Greeks, the latter is the central form from which character diverges, but never entirely departs,—when the two are skilfully blended, the result is especially delightful.

One of the most agreeable qualities of art, and intimately connected with my present subject, is *Grace*.

Grace, if it may be found without beauty of countenance, cannot exist without symmetry of form. It consists chiefly in the natural balance of the figure, and that just degree of motion, called for by the occasion,

which "o'ersteps not the modesty of nature;" unconscious, and unconstrained, it appears to indicate a native innocence, tranquillity, and suavity of mind; an association which true grace always awakens; and this moral charm seems even a part of its essence.

It is conspicuous in the artless positions and gestures of children, and seems to arise spontaneously from that beautiful construction of the human frame which, in all easy action, presents an harmonious undulation of the parts, only to be counteracted by deformity or affectation.

It may be said to dwell in the exquisitely delicate flexions of the head upon the neck; in the flowing lines of the arms, the rising or falling, advancing or retiring of the shoulders; in the facility with which the body turns upon the hips; and in all the smooth and gradual changes which are for ever taking place to preserve the equilibrium of the figure, or obey the gentler impulses of the mind. Without possessing feelings in unison with the graceful, the student will, perhaps, never be able to appreciate this

desirable quality of art, and without a just knowledge of the physical powers of the human figure, he cannot hope to express it.

Grace is everywhere conspicuous in the fine works of the ancients, as might be expected from their assiduous cultivation of form. Nothing can be more simple, easy, and natural than the positions of most of their statues. We see no affected contrasts—no attempts at what is emphatically called attitude—no waste of effort. And where graceful movement was required, as in their dancing or floating nymphs, nothing can be more beautifully expressed.

The most frequent examples of grace among the moderns, are to be met with in the works of Raffaello, Lodovico Caracci, Parmegiano, and Correggio; though both the latter, by attempting to carry it too far, occasionally fell into affectation, than which, true grace has not a more irreconcilable foe.

Flaxman and Stothard, in our own country, may be held up safely and exultingly to the student, as possessing this fascinating quality in its greatest purity. When accompanied

with evident refinement, grace assumes the character of elegance (which is the antithesis of vulgarity, and seems to occupy a place between grace and dignity; it may be termed cultivated grace). Dignity, which partakes somewhat of this quality, is combined with more formality: it indicates self-possession; and, perhaps, a degree of conscious value, which connects it with pride, authority, and high station.

These and all the other shades of character, which combine with and assist expression, are among the greatest charms of our Art, and the highest distinctions of the artist, and must be the more diligently studied, as they are rather to be felt than described.

In treating of forms, next to the human figure the theory of drapery demands attention; and here again we are deeply indebted to the antique. The ancients, who employed drapery to decorate, and not conceal the human figure, have, in their sculpture, left us most excellent examples of various kinds, in motion and at rest (some large and

ample in its folds and texture,—some of extreme delicacy). The student should carefully investigate these, for although painting does not perhaps require always the same degree of precision as we find in ancient sculpture, yet he may gain from the antique, better than from any other source, an insight into the principles on which it should be adjusted; and by reference to Nature, and to the demands of his own art, obtain a knowledge of its true theory. The revivers of painting in Italy very early perceived the importance of drapery, which usually forms so large a portion of their works; and we find even in Giotto good examples of their progress in this branch of composition derived from the study of ancient remains.

Masaccio carried it still further, on whom Fra Bartolomeo, Raffaele, and M. Angelo improved. Neither of these eminent artists, however, can be said to have always preserved that purity of taste in their draperies, that simple and natural, but scientific and beautiful arrangement of the folds, which is

invariably found in the works of the Greek sculptors.

Albert Durer has produced some very grand examples of drapery, which must no doubt have been derived from Nature; though in seeking to give it character, he sometimes tortured it till it became elaborate and artificial. But he well deserves to be consulted.

The Caracci adopted a simple and fine style of drapery; their successors, from imitating one another, rather than referring to Nature, gradually fell into a corrupt, though broad and imposing manner, which long prevailed throughout Europe, but which our continental neighbours have since done much towards reforming. Flaxman (whose feeling and science ever went hand in hand) was a great master in this department of Art; the adjustment of his drapery is usually admirable, and the precepts he has left on this subject in his lectures, cannot be too carefully studied, as they are founded on the truest principles.

In acquiring a knowledge of the mode in

which folds are naturally generated and spread, according to the coarseness or fineness of the material employed, the lay figure will be found of considerable service, at least when the drapery is represented at rest ; but the effects of motion upon it can only be learned from repeated and careful observation of Nature, and the best examples of art. The student must endeavour to comprehend the *rationale* of drapery ; how it is naturally affected, by raising or extending a limb ; in what degree the weight of the material counteracts, by its *vis inertiae*, the effects of more or less violent motion. How the folds originate from those points where it is held, enlarging as they recede, spreading where unconfined, or changing their course where they meet with resistance.

He should pursue them carefully through their whole progress,—attending duly to those sudden terminations technically called eyes, which are often so characteristic and effective. A knowledge of all these particulars will afford him opportunities of turning Drapery to a very great account in



historical or poetical compositions. I should strongly recommend him not to be content with a superficial acquaintance with this, or any other portion of the Art: whatever it may be convenient for him to omit at any time, for the sake of breadth, or from some overruling necessity, should proceed from a thorough intelligence, and not ignorance, of the point, and be nothing more than the judicious sacrifice of one principle to another, more urgent or expedient.

I have now pointed out to the student the principal circumstances connected with *form*, as the leading and most important elements of painting.

I have endeavoured to shew that beauty, character, grace, and grandeur, expression, motion, and energy (the most intellectual, and noblest qualities of our art), all depend on drawing, which deserves therefore to be the determined aim of the student's systematic and persevering application. He must labour strenuously to render his eye mathematically true, his hand firm, prompt, and obedient, that he may transcribe with

readiness and fidelity all the appearances of his model.

In acquiring this power, I would impress on his mind, as an exercise of the most improving kind, an accurate study of outlines. A true circumscription of the mass, gives a more characteristic idea of any object, than the filling up of the interior which is comparatively a much easier task; to fix with accuracy and feeling the precise contours of the human figure; to determine infallibly its lateral boundaries, composed of the edges of so many interweaving muscles; to make an exact section of these, implies in itself a considerable elementary knowledge, and affords incontestable evidence of a good draughtsman.

The student may at the same time be advantageously employed in acquiring an intimacy with the most approved ancient statues; by making careful studies of these in different views, he will at once advance in his power of imitation, obtain a knowledge of style in the principal varieties of the human form, and be prepared to under-

stand them in Nature. When thus initiated, but not till then, he cannot devote himself too assiduously to the study of the living model, which if properly pursued will confirm him in the principles he has acquired from the antique. And here, I feel it a duty to caution him against a practice which (derived perhaps, from a mistaken view of a passage in the writings of Reynolds) has become so prevalent of late in the Academy, that of throwing aside the crayon too hastily for the more seducing use of oil-colours.

These afford a more expeditious mode of imitation; but which, for that very reason, is to be distrusted,—they lead, perhaps, to breadth; but at the expense of what is termed drawing. No one who knows the difficulty of oil-painting, will be disposed to think that the student can begin it too soon, provided he has laid a good foundation in a competent knowledge of the human figure, and the power of making out the nicest details; but this, I am persuaded, is only to be done by a long and laborious use of the crayon. Experience has shewn,

that if this foundation be not laid in early life, it can never be done afterwards, when the other requisites of his art will crowd upon the painter's attention; and the deficiency, he may be assured, will not fail to prove matter of serious regret, and a formidable impediment to him, during his whole career. A finished drawing should give so accurate and forcible an idea of the surface and contours of his subject, that a sculptor might be able to model from it as correctly as from the original itself. This is the true criterion of the draughtsman's ability, and when acquired, may be carried on with comparative ease in oil-colour.

In studying from the living model, I conceive it desirable for the student to adhere to Nature with great fidelity; and not to be over anxious to correct what he may find in the individual before him where he differs from the antique. It is desirable that the artist should be acquainted with the diversities of Nature, and her various details as well as her generalities. Raffaëlle's practice, in this respect, is well

known from the drawings he has left behind him, in which the individualities of his model are copied just as he saw them.

It is afterwards by comparing his studies with each other and with the antique, that the artist, whose taste is well formed, will refer each to its proper class and elicit style without deserting Nature. Believing drawing to be the only foundation on which a painter may safely build, I feel it incumbent on me to urge its importance on your attention, and the more strongly, as the English school has never been distinguished for this quality in any eminent degree.

The student may be assured that it is worth any and every exertion to become an able designer; for without facility in shaping out his ideas, he will never be able to do justice to his own conceptions; on the contrary, the want of this power will operate as a positive check to his invention.

I cannot, I think, put this more strongly to your minds, than by adverting to the examples of two of the presidents of this institution. Reynolds, it is well known, always

regretted his want of drawing, and the not having had in his youth those opportunities of acquiring it accurately, which are best afforded by an academic education.

It was this that made him say, the production of an historical picture was too great an effort for him.

On the other hand, Lawrence triumphed in the possession of what Reynolds felt the want of, and I have heard him declare, that he could never be sufficiently grateful for the strictness with which his father, in early life, had obliged him to apply to drawing. He could not but perceive the facility it gave him, not merely in delineating the features and insuring likeness, but in catching those intellectual varieties, and fugitive graces of his sitters, for which he was so remarkable.

Whenever the student then is tempted to relax in this particular, he may do well to recollect, that the high and deserved reputation which this distinguished painter obtained throughout Europe, was chiefly owing to his great skill in drawing.

## LECTURE III.

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CHIAROSCURO.

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MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,—

IN my last Lecture, I endeavoured to demonstrate the paramount value of design or drawing, and to impress on the student the necessity of securing as early as possible this only solid foundation of painting. I remarked that a mere outline, or contour, if well studied, may give a characteristic idea of the figure of any object, by shewing its general proportions and lateral boundaries, but to convey its anterior appearance, its various projections, planes, and hollows, the contours must be filled up with a scrupulous copy of every gradation of tone observable on its surface, from the highest light to the deepest shade—this belongs to *chiaroscuro*,

which I proceed to consider as the next great essential element of our Art. The term *chiaroscuro*, in its full sense, includes the whole scheme of lights and darks in a picture, from whatever cause they may arise. Of these, some are the necessary consequence of the reflection of the light by which objects are made visible, and are governed by certain optical laws which must be implicitly attended to; for a want of truth in these natural effects will scarcely escape detection from the commonest observer. This part of *chiaroscuro* is comprehended in the drawing or making out of the forms, and constitutes the peculiar process by which the Art imparts to her representations an illusive appearance of substance and relief. Thus far it is only imitative—but in superadding to these, lights and darks which do not necessarily belong to the subject (such as may be produced by a light or a dark drape, or background, a black or white horse, a stormy or bright sky), and in deciding on the intensity, quantity, and arrangement of these tones, *chiaroscuro* becomes essentially



inventive or ideal, and one of the most powerful agents of the painter.

Though derived from observation and study of the more striking or agreeable combinations which we see occasionally in Nature, the *chiaroscuro* of a picture is not necessarily referable to any precise natural standard ; it affords, therefore, great scope to the fancy, taste, and science of the artist ; for it is capable of adding richness, harmony, and vigour to his compositions, as well as of investing them with great poetical feeling and character. It is the *chiaroscuro* which more immediately attracts the eye, and at the first glance gives a favourable or unfavourable impression of the work, as well as a hint at the nature of its subject, and hence it is technically called the effect of the picture, as distinguished from the design ; this may be still farther aided by colour, which is of course included in the idea of a complete picture. Yet a number of admirable compositions in *chiaroscuro*, by various masters, as well as the fine works of engraving, shew how capable it is of delight-

ing by its own separate power, while colour cannot be employed in painting without a degree of chiaroscuro by its lighter and darker tints.

As the principles of an art can only be discovered by investigating the doctrines and practice of those who have most excelled in it, I shall endeavour, after briefly tracing the rise and progress of chiaroscuro, to develop its theory from the examples left us by the most distinguished painters. It does not appear that the ancients were acquainted with inventive or ideal chiaroscuro as a constituent of our art; on the contrary, it is supposed that Harmony, in its present extent and compass, was unknown to them, both in Painting and Music; and there is reason to believe, that, as in the latter art they were unconscious of the power of—

“Cecilia’s mingled world of sound,”

they were equally so, in the former, of those splendid combinations of tone and colour which we see in Rubens, Correggio, and Rembrandt. It would seem that they were

content with a much greater degree of simplicity in both these arts than is found to satisfy the moderns, at least the few specimens we have left of their painting, (which, however, are probably neither of the best masters nor of the best time), evince scarcely any attempt at chiaroscuro beyond that of the mere light and shade which naturally arose out of their imitation of illuminated forms. Of their excellence in this respect there can be no doubt ; it must have been insured by their profound study of Nature, so remarkable in their Sculpture ; but there is no proof of their having understood chiaroscuro as an inventive principle and powerful element of the art. A few circumstances, however, are recorded, which indicate that some of their painters were not wholly without a perception of its value. What is related of Pausias, that in painting a sacrifice, he fore-shortened the victim, and threw its shade on the crowd, to express its height and length, seems to prove this ; and the invention is even an instance of the picturesque, though it may have arisen from accident rather than theory. That Apelles

was a master of tone (which, as compounded of light and dark, is a property of *chiaroscuro*), may be inferred from his celebrated work of "Venus rising from the Sea" (in which he had succeeded in representing the humidity of her skin), as well as from his usual method of passing over the whole of his picture with a dark glaze, to veil or reduce the too great fierceness of the colours, and perhaps to add to their transparency. I may here observe that their sculptors also, were aware of the beauty arising from tone, which is to be found in the extended half-tint or *méplât* of the finest Greek statues, a breadth of treatment very conspicuous in the flat style of the "Panathenaic frieze" in the British Museum, as well as in many of their earlier gems and relievos.

It is needless, however, to pursue any farther inquiry as to the degree of skill which the ancients may have attained in *chiaroscuro*, or to consider from what cause they never possessed so great a knowledge of harmonious combinations as the moderns—curious as the fact may be, that this

philosophical and tasteful people should never have discovered a principle so indispensable (as it would seem now) to the full development of the powers of both Painting and Music. Whether they had never discovered it, or that they rejected it as undesirable, the revivers of painting in Italy could acquire no hint of the value of *chiaroscuro* from their immediate predecessors, the miserable descendants of the ancient Greeks, who supplied them with their first crude notions of art. Aiming only at a close copy of the objects and effects they saw before them, the Italian artists of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were satisfied with a light and shade of the most timid description; relieving their figures chiefly by an opposition of dark-coloured draperies to the bright sky, or light stone buildings which were everywhere presented to their eyes. Giotto, and afterwards Masaccio, seem to have been the first to venture upon introducing a greater breadth and quantity of shadow in their works. But it was reserved for the great philosopher of our Art, Lionardo

da Vinci, to discover the principle of *chiaroscuro* in its fullest meaning, and employ it as a new element in painting.

The high degree of perfection to which he succeeded in carrying this, in combination with colour, may be partly seen in the copy before you of his "Last Supper," in which the lights and darks are so ingeniously varied and proportioned in their quantities and shapes, and carried through the picture with such consummate art, and apparent ease, that it would well deserve to be studied on this account, even though it were not possessed of those nobler qualities of dramatic conception and expression in which it is pre-eminent. I do not include the background, which, by its want of simplicity and the harshness of its parts, considerably prejudices the effect, for all the copies of this work varying in the backgrounds, the defects may be attributed rather to the copyist than to Lionardo, and to the depth which the darks have naturally acquired by time, or it may have been adapted to its particular location. But, in fact, the true nature of

backgrounds was not at this time understood. An original cartoon of this great artist, which the student may see in the painting school, is also a powerful example of the value of broad shadows. Nothing of Correggio excels it in this respect; and it deserves to be remarked, in this as in all his works, how much he made his new principle contribute to the exquisite beauty of his female heads. This cartoon may, perhaps, be one of those which Vasari speaks of as having filled his countrymen with admiration, attracting them in crowds to his house by their novelty of effect. His celebrated "Battle of the Standard," engraved by Edelinck from a drawing by Rubens (the best or only representation we have left of that energetic composition), is a vigorous specimen of chiaroscuro. Where Rubens was so fortunate as to see the original, unless he discovered it in the Louvre or Tuileries, is unknown; but it is obvious that he here found the prototype and all the elements of those noble hunting-pieces which he afterwards produced.

It was from Lionardo that Giorgione, Fra Bartolomeo, and afterwards Correggio derived those principles of relief and breadth of effect, which they displayed so happily in their own works, and by which they gave a new character to painting. Fra Bartolomeo had the honour of rescuing Raffaele from the tameness and insipidity of Pietro Perugino, and imparted to him a perception of the value of extended shade, which he himself had just gained ; but his illustrious pupil does not appear to have ever cultivated chiaroscuro as an inventive principle of great importance. Mengs asserts, that though he understood it well, as respects imitation, he knew nothing of the ideal part, and that when a glimpse of the latter appears in his works it is accidental, and the result rather of his fine natural taste than of science. I must, however, observe that his " St. Peter released from Prison," the " Heliodorus," and the " Transfiguration," are fine examples of depth and relief ; and, in the cartoon of " Elymas struck blind," there is a breadth and combination of dark, introduced by the



spreading of the shadows of the architecture, and the relief of some heads in the middle groupe, by the light behind, which seems like an aim (and a successful aim) at inventive chiaroscuro. In the "Madonna dello Spasimo" there are also examples of finely-conceived light and shadow in the Magdalen and others of the heads (large engravings of which may be seen in the library). Raffaello took care to place his model in such a position towards the light, that the shadows might fall upon it, so as to preserve the forms as entire as possible, contriving the folds of drapery upon the body or limbs in such a manner as to leave the lights broad and unbroken on the prominences, and throw the shadows into the retiring parts; by which he obtained roundness and mass, and gave to his figures a substance and distinctness that is remarkable, even at a distance. The bias of his genius, however, led him to prefer expression to any other quality of the art, and his excellence in that became great in proportion. But Correggio, who had a stronger feeling

for the value of chiaroscuro, devoted himself to it with ardour, and gave it perhaps all the perfection of which it is capable in his own class of subjects (which are invariably of a pleasing character), combining it with a more delicate colour, and bringing all the parts of the art into a poetical union never before accomplished; the predominating principle in all his works, however, was still chiaroscuro. A happier instance of its power in combination with colour, of adding not only to the beauty, but to the sentiment of a picture, cannot perhaps be found than in his celebrated "Notte," at Dresden. The light which illumines the scene emanates from the Infant Christ, and is of that silvery hue which belongs to the first dawn of morning. This idea is supported, and as it were explained, by a streak of light in the horizon expressive of the break of day, bringing to mind, as strongly as words could do, the sublime idea of "the day-spring from on high hath visited us." It would be difficult to point out in the whole range of painting a more felicitous illustration of a

poetical image. Here the two arts successfully reflect their beauties on each other. The breadth, suavity, and fulness of the chiaroscuro is one of the great charms of Correggio's "St. Jerome," at Parma, and is in perfect accordance with the colour, composition, and expression of that fascinating picture. A copy of this celebrated work, by Annibal Caracci, is to be seen in the Bridge-water Gallery, which however falls very short of the beauty and perfection of the original.

His "Christ in the Garden," formerly in the collection of the King of Spain, but now in that of the Duke of Wellington (a repetition of which may be seen in the National Gallery), is another beautiful specimen of the same power and feeling; here, as in most of his works, the chiaroscuro is inventive and poetical. The Saviour is lighted from above, the hovering angel receives his light from Christ, the compactness of the light shews it to be supernatural, and the broad mass of dark background by which it is set off, gives the picture at once brilliance and repose.

Correggio was the first who, by collecting a large mass of light in the centre, connecting light with light, and dark with dark masses, losing the outlines and softening all angles and disagreeable forms into the shadows and negative parts adjoining, obtained that magic and unrivalled union of sweetness, force, repose, and sentiment, which, as Fuseli has said, "affect us like a delicious dream." Giorgione, according to Vasari, adopted that breadth of scuro and vigorous relief which distinguish his pictures, immediately after seeing the works of Lionardo. Titian and Paolo Veronese probably studied the same principles, but they produced their effects in general, more by means of lucid and dark colours than by masses of positive light or any prolixity of shade. Titian invariably made his carnations the chief attraction, as affording the best opportunities for displaying that exquisite colour which was his leading aim, and with which he found tender shadows most compatible, making up his darks by low-toned draperies, or backgrounds ingeniously contrived for the

purpose. Paolo Veronese, like Titian, conducted his chiaroscuro chiefly by tones of colour in an expanded daylight with little or no shadow; a beautiful instance of which may be seen in his picture of "Mercury and Herse," in the Fitzwilliam collection at Cambridge. Tintoretto, on the contrary, whose mind was of a more impetuous nature, relying less exclusively on colour, employed a greater quantity of scuro and fiercer oppositions. As we have no examples by this master of any magnitude or character in England, I would refer the student to Fuseli's vivid description of his great works at Venice, and to prints from him in the library, for some notion of his power and daring in this branch of the Art, in which he surpassed all the Venetian School. A sketch, in the possession of Mr. Rogers, of his celebrated "St. Mark," called the "Miracle of the Hammer," although small, is a very striking specimen of vigorous effect; the great mass of figures which cross the picture in rich and deep-toned draperies, is relieved against almost white

buildings, and the light skimming partially over the groupes, just serves to unite them with the background. On this school I shall have occasion to dwell more in my lecture on colour. As far as their practice is connected with my present subject, it appears to me that they have sometimes fallen into spottiness by making their subdivisions of light and dark rather too distinct, and not giving sufficient attention to the predominating masses of either ; aiming at brilliance and animation, they have lost, perhaps, somewhat of that repose which is no less necessary : they seem occasionally to want a reconciling medium or atmosphere. The mean between these opposite qualities was happily adopted by Rubens, whose powerful genius seized at once upon all the principles of his great predecessors, and made them his own. His copies from "The Battle of the Standard," and from the "Last Supper," of Lionardo, shew that he had well considered and understood their excellence. In his grand hunting-pieces, on the plan of the former, the figures, as in their prototype,

are often relieved by strong darks from light backgrounds, and derive much of their spirit and vigour from this decided opposition, which accords so well with the energy of the actions and the general character of the composition; but they possess, at the same time, all the breadth and repose which are admissible in subjects intended to rouse and excite the feelings. He studied, too (with equal penetration and success), the suavity and union of Correggio, and the distinctness of the great masters of the Venetian School, adopting, with that surprising facility which seems never to have failed him in any department of the art, all that would combine with the splendid system which he had so early formed. I shall endeavour to point out what appears to me the principle on which he conducted the chiaroscuro of some of his admirable works. In his celebrated "Raising of the Cross at Antwerp," he seems to begin from the upper corner of his canvass, on the side on which he supposes the sun to enter, with a broad diffusion of secondary light, into which he gradually

weaves more and more half-tint as he descends towards the centre of his picture, where his strongest darks and lights are collected in the chief groupe,—the upper part of which joins on to the light above, and lower unites with an extended series of darks, which, crossing the composition diagonally, counterbalance and give effect to the great mass of light. Below this, again, the light is revived with considerable brightness, and acts as a satellite, or secondary mass, on the other side of the picture, in the proportion of about a third as compared with the quantity above: thus the light streams through from left to right, gradually sinking into deeper and deeper shade near the centre, from whence it emerges again, and passes out of the picture at the opposite corner. This fine arrangement, combining breadth and unity with repose, may be traced in perhaps the majority of his works. In the “Taking down from the Cross” (the scene requiring a greater solemnity of effect), his light is more concentrated, and is confined chiefly to the principal figure, and the



white drapery in which it is supported ; this is carried off by the lights in smaller masses on the heads and hands of the other figures, and passes out of the picture by an inferior portion of light in the sky. All behind is involved in gloom and mystery. He has made use of the scroll which bore the inscription, and lies now on the ground, to introduce a low whitish tint which varies the effect ingeniously. The deepest shadows are placed close to the centre, and brought to a focus at the dark elbow of the figure descending, which is vigorously relieved from the highest light. The extremes of his scale are there in immediate contact, and the effect is as powerful as his materials would admit. Almost all his works might be adduced as examples of the consummate science of Rubens in this part of the art, the limits of which he considerably enlarged.

In such of his pictures as would allow of it, he frequently adopted black velvet or satin draperies, which act as deep bass notes in the harmony of his effect, increasing his scale in compass and richness. He often

made use of this artifice. He was also very fond of introducing a figure in armour in the centre of his picture, in whose polished cuirass he could bring together his strongest touches of light and dark ; and by blending his tones together more than the Venetians, he united softness with vigour in a greater degree, perhaps, than any other painter, if we except Correggio. I cannot help thinking, however, that his system has occasionally led him into mannerism and too obvious a sacrifice of truth. In his " Rape of the Sabines " in the National Gallery, for instance, his darks are chiefly assembled in the lower part of the picture, which are spread by one or two smaller patches on the left above ; his aim being evidently to obtain great breadth by keeping an extended mass of light in the upper part and in the centre. There he has spread his light sky, by a white building ; and to increase it still more, has made his shadows on the figures adjoining fainter than can possibly be accounted for ; they want middle tint to give them the force which they might be expected to have

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in the situation they occupy as compared with the other groupes, and consequently look evanescent and unreal. Art is perhaps here too palpable. But he seems at all times to have been too well satisfied with the theory he had so happily organized to be very anxious to hide its principles. The license I have adverted to is not, however, apparent in his other pictures in the same collection. His allegorical work, in particular, is a noble specimen of his power in chiaroscuro, as well as in composition and colour.

The Dutch and Flemish painters, in their pictures of familiar life, excelled in the management of light and shade; and, according to Reynolds, have shewn in this department that consummate skill which entirely conceals the appearance of Art; and he particularly recommends to the young artists a careful study of the works of Jan Steen, Teniers, Ostade, &c. The chiaroscuro to be found in these seems to arise naturally from a mere imitation of the ordinary effects and circumstances of the

subjects they chose, skilfully managed. Any appearance of artifice would have been at variance with their homely character, in which great truth and simplicity, with beauty of execution, were the only charms by which they aimed at captivating the spectator. But in the hand of Rembrandt, chiaroscuro, though intimately combined with colour, became the essential, predominating quality of his art; he diminished the quantity of light hitherto usually adopted in painting, and confined it more decidedly in one focus, with which he allowed no other light to vie or interfere in brightness, though he took care that his extended darks should never be empty; these he contrived to vary and enliven by reflected half-tones (which are often the result of merely loading the parts with thicker colour), and thus introduced multiplied details into his shadows with surprising truth and breadth. Reynolds thinks that he has sometimes pushed this concentration of effect beyond its proper limits, and that by making his light too solitary, and employing too small a

quantity of it, he has given an artificial magic-lantern look to his pictures. This, perhaps, may occasionally be the case in the subjects that he has represented out of doors and illumined by the sun; but in others, which fell in more happily with his taste for subdued and deep tones, his *chiaroscuro* seems to be perfect. A beautiful instance of it may be seen in the little picture of "The Nativity," in our National Gallery: here the light proceeds from the Infant Saviour, on the plan of Correggio's "Notte," spreads on the surrounding figures, and forms the principal mass; this is supported by the secondary light of a lantern near, and revived by a third light behind. The rays from these are caught in faint echoes by the rafters, and other parts of the stable, and are diffused throughout with great ingenuity, truth, and picturesque effect. There is, besides, so much propriety in the characters and expressions of the figures, and such consistency in the whole picture, as prove it to be a work of great intellectual as well as great imitative power.

Having alluded to Correggio's "Notte," I am tempted to bring it again before you for an instant, for the purpose of making a remark on the different modes in which Correggio and Rembrandt have treated this subject, in both of which chiaroscuro has so much influence. In skill and science they are both nearly equal,—Rembrandt's composition I think preferable; but they differ essentially in taste. Rembrandt presents us with the birth of an extraordinary child, it is true; the supernatural light in which he is enveloped accounts for the awe and worship of the spectators; and from all the surrounding circumstances, we cannot mistake the subject of the picture for any other than that of "The Nativity;" but we are still chiefly impressed by the truth with which the mean and multiplied details are rendered, and with the technical skill he has displayed; while Correggio, by introducing a groupe of angels floating in the divine light of the Infant Saviour, adoring and rejoicing in the transcendent event which has just taken place,

and the daybreak which has burst on the darkness of the world, elevates the mind to the sublimity of his theme. The students in the painting school have more than once had an opportunity of examining one of Rembrandt's pictures—"Joseph and Potiphar's Wife," to which there is, perhaps, no specimen in this country superior in brilliance of effect and colour; to say nothing of its great truth, and even refinement of expression, a quality which it may with truth be asserted is always to be found in the genuine works of Rembrandt, however ill-lodged in his homely *dramatis personæ*. His "Adoration of the Magi," in the Royal Collection, presents a very remarkable specimen of chiaroscuro, and though, perhaps, not equal to many other of his works, as a whole, has very fine parts, and is interesting, as it strikingly shews the mechanical process by which it is elaborated. Chiaroscuro, as one of the great powers of painting, has been more appreciated, and cultivated with more success, in our own country, than in any of the modern schools.

Perhaps, the invention of mezzotinto engraving, and the great perfection to which it has been carried here, may have had some influence in leading to a fuller perception of the efficiency of the principle. But it is to the genius of Reynolds that the English school is indebted for its development and application. I shall not quote his precepts on this part of the art, because I conclude that every student of this Institution is either already well acquainted with them, or means soon to become so. This great painter has shewn in his doctrine, as well as in his practice, that he had made himself master of all the technical systems of the different schools, and was acquainted with every mode of picturesque effect; he cannot, therefore, be too carefully studied. In his own works, he has displayed the greatest variety of chiaroscuro; sometimes he made his lights tell in decided masses and agreeable shapes upon low middle tints, intermixed with the deepest darks. Of this mode, his "Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse" is a beautiful instance. At other



times, he adopted the contrary principle, of dark masses on an extended light; always combining them with a rich modulation of half-tones, and remarkable breadth. In his "Infant Hercules" (of which the Emperor of Russia is so fortunate as to be possessor) broad lights intersected by strong masses of dark, sweeping across the picture diagonally, like Tintoretto, give a most brilliant and powerful character to this, the finest of his compositions. The chiaroscuro is like a sudden burst of lightning on the scene. In all his works, the strongest darks are closely opposed to the lights by which he renders both distinct and vigorous, and sustains the low and mellow tones of his colour. He employed with great freedom what are called accidental shadows wherever he thought they would improve the effect, leaving the spectator to account for them by "passing clouds," or as he best could. Though not the inventor of this convenient license, which had its origin in the Venetian School, he was the first to bring into practice what seems now to be considered not

merely justifiable, but almost indispensable. To our *staple art*, portrait-painting, it is no doubt of the greatest advantage, in affording opportunities of disguising the formalities of dress, or the abrupt and often awkward termination of parts of the figure; in giving agreeable shapes to the lights, and roundness and union to the whole; it may therefore well be allowed in works where so much is gained by it, if not carried to excess. The great object in portraiture being to give value to the head, the rest of the picture is to be rendered subordinate, but agreeable by every contrivance the artist can have recourse to, consistently with a certain appearance of truth.

The Venetians rarely attempted to relieve their figures, when dressed in black or dark colours, by backgrounds still darker, but rather by lighter tones, giving them in this manner a distinct and natural character; but Reynolds justly considered strong relief as less desirable than breadth and fulness of effect, and he inculcated the propriety of supporting the strong shadows of foreground

objects, by equally strong darks in the background. In consequence of this principle, he frequently made a black coat assume the appearance rather of a grey one, by extreme depth of tone in a curtain or wall, or even sky behind. The singular beauty of his hues, and the rich colour he introduced in other parts of his picture, enabled him, however, to render this agreeable; but it seems rather a struggle of Art with Nature, and in other hands is, perhaps, seldom successful.

In the consideration of this branch of my subject, I must not omit to cite another distinguished artist of our school. Lawrence may be said to have extended, varied, and invigorated the treatment of chiaroscuro, and to have wielded it in all its different modes and characters with uncommon power. His peculiar brilliance arises from the vivid opposition and broad masses of his lights and darks (with little intervention of middle tint), and the particular intensity which he contrived to give them; to obtain which he employed the most powerful pigments that

chemical science could produce. His white was like snow, and his darks deeper than black; and these were often brought into the fiercest collision, as if with the endeavour to rival light itself, and dazzle the eye of the spectator.

Whether this be the legitimate aim of painting, and whether his pictures did not lose somewhat in beauty of tone, while they achieved such uncommon splendour of effect, may admit of a doubt. But to extend the sphere of art, and shew where and how *any* of its powers may be augmented, is an admitted test of genius, and however the qualities thus practically evolved may afterwards be modified, or applied, they may at least be considered as valuable landmarks for the guidance of future artists, and he who has raised them is justly entitled to gratitude and admiration.

Were it proper on this occasion to do so, I might here add the names of several living authorities among us, which I am persuaded will naturally occur to my hearers; but I shall rather endeavour to assist the

student in further developing the principles I have now laid before him, and point out their practical application. The first point which seems necessary in arranging the chiaroscuro of a picture is to determine the source and nature of the light by which the objects in it are supposed to be illuminated, as every thing must depend on this ; whether it proceed from the sun, or some artificial cause ; and come in from one side, from behind, or in front of the spectator, as these will necessarily influence the situation, direction, and depth of the shadows, and must consistently pervade the work. These are to be considered as fixed points, on which the ideal part is to be engrafted ; and here the necessity will immediately appear for a considerable knowledge of aërial, as well as linear perspective, and a familiar acquaintance with the laws of optics, without which the projection of the shadows of objects upon the ground, the deviation occasioned in the progress of these by the interposition of other bodies, and the reflections of the light under various circumstances ; can never

be truly expressed. The poetical character of the subject will then suggest what additional quantities of light or dark may be desirable to give effect to the whole; which invention, taste, and science must contrive, proportion, and distribute. Every subject requires a particular treatment of chiaroscuro. As the work partakes of "the gay or grave, the lively or severe," *light* or *dark* should prevail, and be more or less dispersed, concentrated, or opposed. In inventions of a cheerful or joyous nature, a large preponderance of light and delicate half-tint is desirable, set off by a few darks, as we see in the pictures of Paolo Veronese and Guido, and in some of Rubens.

In those of a grave or pathetic character, the greater portion of the picture should consist of a low half-tint, deepening into strong shades, with a small quantity of subdued light. This is deemed the legitimate tone of historical painting, especially of scriptural history, and is conspicuous in the works of Lodovico Caracci and most of the Bolognese School.

When the subject is gloomy, still more dark will be necessary; if terrific, a proximity of shade, with flashes of vivid light, and little middle tint, as may be found in the pictures of Guercino, Caravaggio, and Spagnoletto. In works again of a magnificent character, the chiaroscuro may be made out more by richness and depth of colour, as we see in those of the Venetian School and Rubens. Where vivacity is required, the lights and darks must be more contrasted or enforced.

In all cases a chief and predominant mass of light or dark is essential, which must be modulated through the work; either of these may form the melody or air, and the other the accompaniment. The effect will be more piquant, if small quantities of the strongest light and dark be brought up as reserves at those points where sparkle is required; such was often the practice of Titian, who generally spread the light and dark throughout his pictures with an economy that still left him the means of giving additional spirit to the chief point, or focus,

by a small portion of each drawn from the extremes of his scale. In his picture of "Venus and the Graces," of which Mr. Thompson's copy in the Academy will give the student an opportunity of judging, the strongest touches of both light and dark are brought close together on the wing of the Cupid in front, which forms the salient point of the composition: this is the principle of the light and shadow on a bunch of grapes, the favourite system of this great master, by which he gave a centre to his picture and insured breadth, roundness, and union of effect, without emptiness. This is also the principle of the chiaroscuro of Correggio and Rubens. Rembrandt is still more spherical and blended, and for that reason occasionally appears more artificial. Reynolds, to obtain great force, and support his rich tone of colour, sometimes adopted large masses of midnight shadow, in which perhaps the parts are too much sacrificed and confounded with the background, although no one is more remarkable in general for a beautiful modulation of low half-tints in his darks;



but it is not improbable that the want of a more academic education may have disposed him to give less value to form as an element of the art than it deserves, and always maintains in those higher styles which he so much felt, and his admiration of which is to be found in every page of his writings.

After all, if a fine effect can be made out by the natural light and shadow (belonging to the forms) and the colour of the subject, without obvious contrivances, and a display of chiaroscuro, the work will probably be of a higher order, although, as I have said, such aids seem almost indispensable in the treatment of portraits; at any rate, they are chiefly admissible in ornamental works, having in themselves a great tendency to undermine sentiment. In avoiding this error, however, Poussin seems to have fallen into the opposite extreme, and to have lost sight of that concentration and subordination which produce unity of effect, an indispensable requisite in every style. Reynolds remarks that, in this respect, he is just the reverse of Rembrandt, and is as defective

in chiaroscuro as Rembrandt is too artificial and condensed.

The examples I have now brought forward from the works of those painters who have most excelled in chiaroscuro, appear to me to contain all its principles as an element of our art; but I may further observe, that the science of chiaroscuro (for so it may be termed in the present state of painting) has given a new character to art, and, in this country at least, has become not only an essential part of the composition, but almost its distinguishing feature, and the most relished; it is, in fact, the principal ingredient of that quality of painting called the *picturésque*, on which I think it may here be desirable to offer a few observations. The term "*Picturesque*," derived from the Italian *Pittoresco*, literally signifies that which is after the manner of a painter, and therefore, it may be considered a part of my duty to point out what qualities are generally understood to be included in it. The epithet is too vague to admit of any close definition, but it seems to have been

founded on the gradual discovery or perception, that light, dark, and colour are not only valuable as the necessary instruments of imitation, as the language of the art, but that they have in themselves properties so agreeable, that when skilfully adapted, they are capable of communicating interest to the most ordinary objects and circumstances, and of making a picture (in the common acceptation of the word) out of the most trivial, and even repulsive materials, the dregs and refuse of Nature—the sun breaking out upon a dunghill, and reflected in a puddle, may furnish a picturesque effect.—Rembrandt's "Kitchen," among many other of his works, might be cited as an example. The hunting-pieces of Rubens, and the celestial light of Correggio's "Notte," also belong to it, from their brilliancy of *chiaroscuro*. The picturesque appears to have been either unknown or disregarded by the ancients, and those masters who preceded Lionardo; and, indeed, the term could hardly have arisen till after painters had begun to display a degree of mannerism.

This first became conspicuous in the works of the Machinisti, who, according to Fuseli, date their origin from Correggio himself. His great works in the Duomo, and church of St. Giovanni, at Parma, no doubt led the way to those enormous compositions which fill the cupolas and ceilings of the churches and palaces of Italy. Mengs considers Lanfranco more particularly the inventor of this style, who, he says, copied only the surface of Correggio's art, but did not penetrate its refinement. The distance from which these works were to be viewed, suggested and almost rendered necessary violent antitheses of colour and effect,—sprawling attitudes, and, in general, a caricature of all the qualities desirable in a legitimate picture, in the midst of which, and at such a height, neither sentiment nor subject could be very distinguishable. Practice on this immense scale soon gave the artists so employed extraordinary facility in the arrangement and execution of these often masterly productions, for such may certainly be considered the ceiling of the

Barbarini Palace, by Pietro da Cortona, the works of Lanfranco, and many others; and these brilliant effusions of the practical powers of the art, seem to have introduced a passion for the new manner of the painters, or the picturesque, in contradistinction to the most pure and sober style of their great predecessors. This epithet (and with it we must suppose the qualities it implies) was soon extended to Poetry. Sculpture, and even Architecture, began to affect the picturesque; as we see in the fluttering marble draperies, and Rubens-like forms of Bernini, and the architectural extravagancies of Borromini and Juvara; and it is now the great criterion of all that is supposed to be most interesting in landscape scenery. What then are its particular properties, as it belongs to painting?

A line of demarcation seems to have been drawn on the continent in relation to the arts, which separates them into the classical and the romantic styles. The first, which is that of the ancients and the most celebrated moderns, aims at grandeur and symmetry of

form, beauty, grace, sublimity, pathos, all that is calculated to excite our best feelings, and exercise our noblest faculties, to raise and adorn our nature, avoiding every thing mean, sordid, and vulgar. The latter—the romantic—appears to be essentially the same as the picturesque, “a sort of chartered libertine,” who, abhorring the formal and the classical, courts the wild, the capricious, the strange, and accidental; and, proud of a bravura of execution, hardly compatible with purity or correctness, is content with stimulating the fancy and delighting the sense.

Each of these styles has its warm partisans—which of the two is the worthier aim of art, I need hardly point out; yet it is not to be denied that the picturesque also deserves to be studied in its utmost extent. That which may be considered the most attractive quality of our art, which may include the whole of its peculiar and appropriate interest, and the means by which its higher aims may be made effective, cannot safely be neglected; nay, something is to be sacrificed to its claims.

Poetry, when combined with Painting, must be of such a kind as will unite freely with its elements, and, if necessary, bow somewhat to its paramount pretensions; as Music, when "married to immortal Verse," though less intellectual than her partner, asserts a similar precedence, and sense is often compelled to give way in some degree to sound. In both these instances Poetry is not in her own dominions, but is acting only as an ally, and sense and intellect must compromise their reciprocal claims as well as they can.

Reynolds has justly said that "perhaps no apology ought to be received for offences committed against the vehicle (whether it be the organ of seeing or hearing) by which our pleasures are conveyed to the mind." And how much of the picturesque may, by a great master, be combined even with the sublime, without degrading its elevated character, his admirable picture of "Mrs. Siddons" practically and strikingly proves. It is evident, however, from his Discourses, that he conceived the picturesque to belong

properly to the ornamental, in contradistinction to the great style of painting. And he objects on this ground to a frequent practice of the Venetian School, that of throwing the principal figure into shadow, a picturesque circumstance which, I confess, does not appear to me altogether admissible in subjects of a high poetical character—some may, perhaps, demand such a mode of treatment, and derive from it particular grandeur. Sir Joshua has himself adopted it in his “Macbeth in the Witches’ Cave.” It is of course generally unfavourable to expression, as is the Elizabethan compared with Grecian architecture. If our art has been losing ground in intellectual dignity since the days of the great triumvirate—Lionardo, M. Angelo, and Raffaello—it has much advanced in the power of chiaroscuro and picturesque effect.

Reynolds recommends that we should in these days endeavour to soften the severities of the grand style, and in the instance of “Mrs. Siddons,” he has done so with a success that puts criticism to silence. It would be



a question, however, of some nicety to determine, whether many of those celebrated works, which to modern eyes may seem rather deficient in picturesque effect (or in other words dry and formal), would, or would not, be improved by a larger portion of its fascinations ; and it might be an interesting, and not unimproving exercise, to take up the cartoons, for instance, and try how far they might be benefited or otherwise by such an admixture. One may conceive that greater breadth and force might be given to some of them without injury ; and that neither the composition, style, nor expressions, would necessarily suffer by greater truth and harmony in the hues in which they are presented to us. An able and judicious artist might possibly accomplish this, and render them more attractive at the first glance, without interfering with the higher aim of these great works. Such, perhaps, might be the case with "The Charge to Peter," the "Ananias," the "Paul at Athens," and others, and many of the backgrounds might evidently be sim-

plified with advantage ; but a more splendid scale of colour, and an ostentatious or imposing chiaroscuro, like that of Rubens or Rembrandt, would infallibly degrade them to the ornamental style, and dispossess them of the dignity and sentiment for which they have hitherto been so generally and justly admired. Perhaps even the bland union of qualities which we find in Correggio, might not improve their character, but rather lower them from the grand to the pleasing. I apprehend the "School of Athens" could admit of such a reformation (if at all) only in a very limited degree. The figures in this magnificent composition are so numerous, and the subject of so comprehensive a nature, that it seems incapable of being treated with a greater degree of unity than it already possesses, and although the hues and the harmony might be improved, more probably would be lost than gained by any endeavour to give it greater breadth, and still more by the vain attempt to dress it in the qualities of modern painting. It decidedly belongs to the classical,

of which character it might easily be stripped, but from its very nature it could never be made picturesque. In fact, the degree in which the master-pieces of that period might be rendered more attractive to the sense, without their losing caste as works of mind, would, I think, be comparatively trifling, and the experiment of reforming them, one of no ordinary difficulty. I will not pursue these speculations any further at present, but conclude with observing, that when this useful but somewhat insidious ally, picturesque chiaroscuro, does not challenge an undue attention, but is judiciously adapted to the demands of the subject, when it assists the sentiment and purpose, and is in union with the poetical character of the picture, it may justly claim its share of admiration; but if it usurp any thing beyond this, it soon becomes meretricious and degrading, has a tendency to substitute mere stains and blots for design and expression, and to merge the intellectual in the technical capabilities of the art.

## LECTURE IV.

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ON COLOUR.

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MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,—

DESIGN and chiaroscuro, it has been shewn, are in themselves sufficient to enable the painter to tell a story, or convey a sentiment with considerable effect, and, perhaps, a sufficient degree of imitation, and may therefore be regarded as the true basis of our art; but to develop all its capabilities, to complete its illusive power, and present it in its utmost beauty, there is still wanting the important element of colour, to which I next proceed.

Colour seems to be an exclusively ornamental quality; we find it scattered through all the classes of Nature, animate and inanimate, decking with tints of equal bril-

liance, the shell, the flower, the gem, birds, beasts, and reptiles, as well as the clouds which attend upon the rising or setting sun, and with no apparent use, but that of cheering and delighting mankind with a perpetual display of splendour and magnificence. This bountiful provision of Nature has the power of imparting a charm to things the most trivial and otherwise unattractive, and thus furnishes the painter with ready and inexhaustible resources for the embellishment of his subject, of what kind soever it may be.

Colour, like chiaroscuro, may be treated of either as a property to be found in the local hues which naturally belong to every object (that is, as merely imitative), or as it forms a part of that ideal whole which he has conceived in his own mind, and seeks to call into existence on his canvass, and is altogether inventive or theoretical.

The inventive part of colouring (to which I shall, at present, more particularly confine myself) includes a consideration of the quantities, arrangement, and harmony of the

several colours employed in the building up, or composition of a picture.

Whether colour is an inherent quality in bodies, or how their surfaces dissect the light, and reflect, or refract the innumerable hues of which it appears to be composed, is perhaps not yet satisfactorily determined. It is, however, admitted that light consists of but three original colours, red, yellow, and blue, from which all others proceed—the orange, green, indigo, and violet, being formed from a mixture of the primary colours, between which they are to be found in the rainbow, or may be shewn by the prism. Of these, the red is the most intense, and seems to be pre-eminently colour, which becomes yellow in the light, which seems its centre, and blue in the dark part of the ray—exhibiting the natural union of *chiaroscuro* with colour. Painters have agreed to call red and yellow, and their mixtures, warm; and blue, and those tints of which the larger portion is blue, cold colours; the presence of all three, either in a pure or compounded state, is indispensable to

harmony; and the allotting to each its due quantity and relative position, are points of the first consequence in the colouring of a picture. The simplest mode of harmony, is where one of the three primary colours is pure, and the other two are combined; as when red, in due quantity and tone, is opposed to green, yellow to purple, or blue to orange. The fullest and richest harmony is when the seven prismatic hues are all displayed together. In either of these cases, there is the just proportion of cold colour necessary to counterbalance the warm. It would seem to follow, that to produce an agreeable effect of light in painting, the same proportion of warm and cold colour should be adopted, as we perceive in a dissected solar ray; but, besides, that these proportions do not appear to have been very accurately ascertained, we shall not find this principle constantly observed in the works of the best colourists. Reynolds inculcates a general diffusion of warm colours, with only so much cold intermingled as may serve to give it variety, and this seems to

have been the more usual practice of Titian, Rubens, and other great authorities.

Various opinions have been entertained as to the relative situations which the different colours should occupy in a picture. Some have thought that the most perfect, or even the only model for this purpose, is to be found in the rainbow, and this was strongly insisted on by the president, West, who, in the latter part of his life, had given much attention to this element of the art, and whose judgment, at all times, well deserved consideration. According to him, the red should be placed on the side on which the light enters, then the orange, yellow, green, and so on; but this order, however agreeable, would, if always followed, inevitably give to all pictures the same general aspect; as we find this arrangement, in Nature only, in the rainbow itself, and in a few accidental effects, we are, at least, entitled to doubt the necessity of adhering to it, on all occasions, and also to question if some of the fine pictures of the best colourists would have gained by being more in conformity



with Mr. West's system. But let us recur at once to the practice of the most approved masters in this branch of the art, from whose works alone a safe conclusion may be deduced.

As my wish in these Lectures is to convey to the student useful suggestions and information, rather than to indulge in discursive speculations, I shall not dilate on what has been affirmed or conjectured of the colouring of the ancients. The specimens left us of their paintings are so few and inconsiderable, as to supply us only with vague and uncertain notions of the extent of their skill in this particular. All that can be collected from their writers seems to prove that they either knew not, or disregarded, that complicated harmony of colours which characterizes modern art. In the imitative part it cannot reasonably be doubted that they excelled as much in colour as we are sure they did in design; and some of their paintings remaining possess the qualities of breadth, purity, and truth of tone in an eminent degree. But I shall begin my

examination of the rise and progress of colouring, as a technical element of painting, with the great painter and philosopher, who may be called the founder of modern art, Lionardo da Vinci. This extraordinary man was not only the first who unfolded the principles of chiaroscuro, but he also anticipated Newton in discovering the threefold colour of light; and although, from the effects of time, or from the use of some pigment which has unfortunately changed, the shadows of his pictures have generally become too dark, many of his works shew that he had made great progress in the path which he had so happily opened.

The copy above me from "The Last Supper" exhibits portions of very refined and beautiful colour, which may be fairly supposed to have belonged to the original in at least an equal degree; possibly some passages in the copy may have been executed by Lionardo himself. In the St. John, and in the neck of Judas, there is a great feeling of tone; and the arrangement of the colours in general, though not prismatic, is

very agreeable and harmonious; the distribution of the warm and cold tints throughout, highly skilful, finely varied and proportioned, with sufficient breadth and unity. So intimately is colouring connected with chiaroscuro, that in adverting to those who have led the way to excellence in this bright track, I may repeat, in the same order as I did in my last Lecture, the names of Fra Bartolomeo, Giorgione, and Correggio, as equally excelling in both. Raffaello, though he rarely courted them, was by no means deficient in either: his "Miracle of Bolsena" is a convincing proof of his fine perception of rich and harmonious tones. But the great artist who stands at the head of the Venetian School, Titian, seems to have been the first to comprehend the true nature of this element of painting, and to establish a theory of colouring on sound philosophical principles. In the imitative part he applied to colour the same system on which the Greeks had founded style in the treatment of form, excluding whatever was accidental or peculiar, and preserving only

its essential and permanent qualities, he purified it from all that was vulgar, trivial, and inharmonious in tone, gave value to the local hues, and raised it from a mere servile copy of individual models to an ideal perfection, impressing on it the stamp of general Nature, in her several classes, with a truth and simplicity unknown before. He fully perceived, also, its extensive capability as an inventive element of painting. He usually spread a modulated succession of rich warm tints through his picture (both lights and darks), and gave value to both by intermingling portions of decided blue between the two. These blues appear the more brilliant and effective from the warm tints that surround them, and are artfully infused into their shadows. He seems invariably to subordinate every thing to his carnations; to keep which as pure and broad as possible, he adopted (as I observed in my last) fainter shadows than Tintoretto or Giorgione, and made out his chiaroscuro by light and dark local colours, reducing his whites to a pearly tint to increase the brightness of his flesh,

enveloping and uniting all the lights in a flood of golden radiance, supported by warm draperies, which gives his pictures the glow and harmony of objects seen by a setting sun. Colour soon became his predominant aim, and this fascinating part of the art seduced him from the cultivation of powers, which, as he has occasionally shewn, might have enabled him to vie with the great designers of the Roman School. In proof, I need but refer to the "St. Peter Martyr," and those fine compositions on the ceilings of the Salute at Venice. How far he may have erred in the preference he thus gave to colour, or whether his fame would have been as great as it is had he chosen differently, it were vain to inquire. The art, at least, has probably been a gainer by the course he adopted ; and is perhaps indebted to him for sound principles of colouring, in which it might otherwise still be deficient.

This country, fortunately, possesses many fine specimens of his talents, to which I may refer you. The "Ganymede," in our National Gallery, exhibits a taste in colour,

quite in accordance with the grand character of the composition,—sufficiently picturesque in tone, but extremely simple. His “Venus and Adonis,” in the same collection, is also a fine work, in all other respects, as well as in colour, and evidently the production of his ripened knowledge. His “Bacchus and Ariadne,” also in the National Gallery, well deserves the student’s close examination ; he will observe in it a larger portion of strong blue than is usual in Titian’s later works (perhaps occasioned by the ultramarine having retained its purity in a greater degree than the other pigments he employed). The carnations are, in consequence, particularly rich and glowing. This picture is also a model for careful and elaborate execution. In the Bridgewater collection, is a picture of an earlier period, by this great artist, called “The Three Ages,” which, by the favour of its noble and liberal owner, was lately before the students in the painting school, a work as pure in sentiment as in colour, and equally admirable for its exquisite feeling, as for the suavity and truth of its hues ; and in the

same collection, the half-figure of "Venus in the Sea," is not inferior in taste, both of colour and drawing, to any thing he ever produced. His "Acteon," also in the same collection, shews the maturer treatment, but less finished workmanship of a consummate colourist. I shall advert but to one more specimen of this great master's pencil, which, though not in this country, has, probably, been seen by many of my audience,—I mean his "Christ crowned with Thorns," now in the Louvre; one of the most brilliant examples of his pictorial skill, and painted in the zenith of his powers. The prevailing tone of the picture arises from an extended mass of iron-grey colour in the background, which is brought into the front by a figure in mail armour, of a similar tone; this gives a stern and gloomy air to the whole, very suitable to the pathetic character of the subject. To balance this quantity of cold and sombre tint, a sufficient portion of very rich, warm colour is introduced in the foreground parts,—the focus of light and colour is on the right thigh of the principal figure, where

are assembled golden, flesh, bright crimson, and blue—the yellow skirt of the figure on the left, and the crimson robe, support, and spread the groupe of rich tints about the centre, and by this management the picture is entirely rescued from monotony and heaviness. Nothing can be more admirable in colour and appropriate effect. This work was so highly admired at its first appearance as to attract many of Titian's scholars, and other artists from different parts of Italy, to settle at Milan, for the purpose of studying it.

I pass by Tintoretto, from the want of examples near enough to refer to, of his vigorous colour combined with the fiercest chiaroscuro. Two productions of this master may be seen at Hampton Court, which are below his usual standard. Of Giorgione, we have a few smaller specimens in this country, which are very conclusive evidence of his possessing chiaroscuro and colour, in the happiest union, together with a beautiful sentiment that characterizes his works in general.



A figure of "Temperance" in the possession of the Academy, is a graceful specimen of the talents of this rare artist, whose early death has, probably, deprived the world of many admirable productions.

Paolo Veronese seems to have made Titian his model in colour and effect, which he employed, however, with an unbridled luxuriance of imagination, and rendered decidedly paramount over all the other qualities of his art; and it must be admitted that in the brilliance and beauty of his hues, as well as in the adaptation of his colouring to large decorative compositions, he has never been surpassed. A fine specimen of the great purity and freshness of his colour may be seen in his "Mercury and Herse," in the Fitzwilliam collection, at Cambridge. Of his larger works, the "Marriage of Cana," now in the Louvre, has always been the theme of admiration in its particular class. Having given an attentive consideration to this picture, in its present situation (where it has, no doubt, been seen by many of my audience), I shall lay before you the result

of my remarks upon it. The story of this immense work is lost in the splendour and *bizarrerie* of the banquet. Its real subject is properly colour and magnificence, to which all other meaning is made subservient. It may be considered as a large nosegay, in which the light and dark—the warm and cold tints, are arranged and intermingled with admirable skill, effect, and harmony, without offering any predominate mass, unless it be the large portion of light in the sky. The composition is connected by a symmetrical arrangement of architecture, reaching on each side from the bottom to the top: the light is brought down on the left by the marble columns and piles of plate to the tablecloth, and carried out below by means of some white in a dog placed there for that purpose; just above which the painter has concentrated his richest colours, opposing the warm white of the tablecloth to bright deep-toned fruits, and one of those light-figured dresses which he was so fond of introducing in the focus of his pictures. These contrivances are echoed rather more faintly in another figured

drapery and another cluster of rich colours; the lights are chiefly composed of positive white, flesh-colour, and light yellows, immediately opposed by deep reds and blues, the reds varying from scarlet to violet; every artifice is resorted to for the purpose of making out the chiaroscuro without much shadow; the dark heads and draperies of the line of figures at table (crossing the composition horizontally) tell very decidedly against the bright lights of the sky, the strong and extended blue of which makes the figures below appear rich and warm, though they are interspersed with so much of the blue of the sky, a little deepened, as was necessary to prevent heat and heaviness. The middle tints throughout are produced by orangy and red colours, gradually deepening into a cluster of darks on the right, which counterpoise the brilliancy of the left corner. These dark colours are carried through in a diagonal line to the top of the right side, where, with the columns in shade, they make up the scuro of the picture. The deep red of a figure in front (the chief

mass of dark) is relieved against green, and rendered still more effective by the figure close to him in a yellow-white dress, who is Paolo himself. It seems to have been a principle with him always to introduce white near yellow, to give it positive colour (and this is the case with Correggio also): green is interspersed in small quantities (generally as secondary to the yellows), to give brilliance to the flesh-colours. The largest mass of blue, out of the sky, is in a back figure sitting at the end of the table on the right, which contrasts vigorously with a stooping figure in yellow; and, to complete the richness and harmony of colour at this point, a scarlet vest and staff are given to the figure above (perhaps the ruler of the feast), and a sparkle is here introduced, by means of the glass held up by a boy sitting, in which you at length find you have stumbled on the miracle of the water changed into wine. The figure in blue has also the further contrast of a bright orpiment sleeve. The upright figure, in ornamented white, vies in brilliancy with the left corner of the table,

the glitter and richness of which it seems intended to echo, while it serves to negative and keep back the figures behind. All the tints of the picture tell distinctly and almost as spots, which contribute much to their brilliance. There is no attempt at blending light with light, and dark with dark, as in the systems of Correggio or Rubens, but breadth and continuity are effected by detached portions of harmonizing colour.

I have dwelt on this justly celebrated work, the rather as I know of none which displays more of chromatic ingenuity, or that better elucidates the principles of the ornamental Venetian School; and if the merits of any works are to be judged of by the skill with which the obvious aim of its author has been carried out, few pictures can be said to have been more completely successful than the "Marriage of Cana." It has fully accomplished its end, which was to fill an immense canvass with a rich combination of colour and effect, and to delight the eye, rather than afford occupation for the mind.

Correggio does not appear to have considered colour with that almost exclusive partiality which actuated Titian and Paolo, but he justly and feelingly appreciated its value as one of the great powers of the art, and has invariably made it contribute its due assistance in all his fascinating works. Among the variety of attractions presented in his "St. Jerome," it would be difficult to say which is the most engaging. They charm us individually, and in their union, and in colouring, not least. The "Notte" I have already spoken of, as displaying the poetry of colour and chiaroscuro in a degree amounting to the sublime. The specimens from the pencil of this rare artist, which have lately been added to our National Gallery, enable those who have not had an opportunity of seeing his great works at Parma and Dresden, to form some estimate of his taste and skill as a colourist. From these and all his other pictures, Correggio appears to have uniformly avoided a florid style of colour. They may be considered as modulations in a subdued key; even in the

picture of "Venus, Mercury, and Cupid," which admitted of the more vivid colouring of the two, there is scarcely a larger portion of bright red than is to be found in the cheeks of the Cupid. Flesh-colour of different hues, finely opposed by a good deal of warm pale green, a cold deep red, light broken yellow, and a small quantity of blue, make up the harmony, and a little cluster of gay tints, light blue, yellow, and red, on the wing of the Cupid, gives sufficient vivacity and point to the delightful breadth of the work. In the "Ecce Homo," the carnations, also, are the leading tones; and though the crimson or purple robe in the centre of the picture is perhaps more vivid in colour than is well adapted to pathos, yet it was necessary as an historical part of the subject. It may be observed, too, that he has reduced the quantity of this tint as much as he could, and by a pentimento which may easily be traced, has even taken away a part of what he at first thought desirable: in so doing, he has extended his mass of light, while, by means of the deep

blue cloak of the inimitable fainting mother, he has given a solemnity to the general aspect of the picture which is strikingly impressive. The piece of white drapery is happily introduced to set off the colours, and is made use of also to detach, with particular spirit, the fingers of the Christ, where he seems to have thought it most convenient to produce the strongest effect of relief, and give roundness and unity to the whole.

The genius of Rubens was not less conspicuous in colour than in all the other parts of the art; and he thoroughly incorporated into his system the principles of Venetian colour, with the chiaroscuro he had derived from Lionardo and Correggio. Happily, we are possessed of many examples of his great power in this element of painting. His "Ixion," in the Marquis of Westminster's collection, has twice graced the painting school for several months; and as it must still be in the recollection of many of the students, I am induced to offer a few observations upon this fine work. The invention is ingenious and poetical, the



composition graceful and expressive, and it wants only some refinement in the drawing to make it in these respects complete ; but refinement is not a characteristic of Rubens in any one branch of his art ; and this remark will apply (though perhaps with minor force) to his colouring. Like Titian (on whose system his own is principally founded), he generally gave the chief attraction to his carnations, and they form a very considerable portion of this picture, varied in tone, and partly thrown into shadow ; but they exhibit a peculiarity of treatment which we do not find in any other artist, excepting in some of his imitators. I allude to that decided separation of the flesh-tints into distinct stripes, lying side by side (a dissection of the local colour, which is so remarkable in many of his works) ; his high lights are almost yellow ; next to those, a bright rosy or deep red, as the complexion required ; then a strong grey tint, almost blue, running into still warmer reflections. These, when viewed from a sufficient distance, whence they come

in a blended state to the eye, acquire the tone and effect of Nature, and gain in brilliance from their crudeness; but when seen near, they are sometimes offensively coarse, and would be intolerable but for the powerful chiaroscuro by which they are controlled or absorbed. The work I am speaking of exhibits some variation from his ordinary practice in the arrangement of his colours. The shadows are cool; the single mass of red is in the centre, and is recalled only on the back of the Cupid; the brightest blue is brought very near it, and makes this part the focus of colour, which is well placed above the heads of the principal figures, and gives air to the celestial personages in the sky. The darks are arranged on one side of the picture, the lights on the other: nothing approaching to white is to be seen, and very little yellow, which renders it more fresh and elegant in tone than his pictures in general. The works of Rubens at Antwerp (to some of which I adverted in my last) are not less remarkable for their colour than their chiaro-

scuro, an examination of which will fully repay any artist who may be induced to make the journey. Most of these have been commented on by the best critics, and I shall therefore pass them by. But of one picture there, which is placed over his tomb, in the church of St. Jacques, I could wish to give the students some idea. The subject is a "Holy Family with Saints," and consists in fact of the different branches of his own family, whom he has thus perpetuated. It is not one of those extensive compositions into which he was able to bring forward all the resources of painting, but it is a remarkable example of his skill in colour and effect. In the centre of the picture is a beautiful profile figure of the Magdalen, standing in front of the Virgin and Child; her loose hair, of a very rich brown, is relieved against a grey sky; her skin is fair as a white rose—the shoulder and arm bare, with a piece of linen attached to it, varying but little in tint from the flesh itself; the lower part of her dress is a mass of deep transparent black. Close behind her stands St. George

(Rubens himself), in a polished cuirass, which extends the strong light and dark of the Magdalen; and immediately before her is Joseph, leaning forward, whose arm is covered by a large mass of crimson drapery, the richest portion of colour in the work. Thus the great force of light, dark, and colour is brought together in the centre. In the right corner is St. Jerome, sitting, partly naked, and of a very hot, red tone,—the garment about him still redder; but this tendency to rustiness is checked by a little cherub between his knees (supporting the bible, whose flesh is of the freshest and fairest hue), and by the deep blue mantle of the Virgin above him; the reds are recalled on the left side of the picture, by a banner in the hand of St. George. In the sky, are three or four hovering cherubs gracefully composed, one of whom holds a wreath over the Infant; in which is a small portion of green, seemingly contrived as a foil to the quantity of flesh-colour. A low horizon has given the painter an opportunity of shewing, between the legs of St. George, a peep of

landscape, in which there is a little more green and cool colour; this and the green harbour behind the Virgin, combining with her blue mantle, make up the cool portion of the picture. These vivid oppositions are all brought into the most complete harmony. The disposition of the whole, excepting only the sprawling attitude of the St. Jerome, is not less beautiful than are the parts, and it appeared to me altogether the most sparkling, and even elegant specimen of his pencil I ever saw. Sir Joshua Reynolds, in his journey to Flanders, has noticed the remarkable brightness of this picture. Rubens seems to have aimed, like the Venetians, at adding vivacity and intensity to the colouring of Nature, though he rendered it, like every other part of the art, rather too systematic, unless for those extensive decorative compositions which he was so often called upon to execute. Amid the gorgeous gold and velvet ornaments of a church or palace, his splendour was in its place. But he adopted the same general principles in all his pictures, small or large, whatever their

theme, not excepting even his landscapes; and though richness, where the subjects require it is desirable, an excess of florid colour always offends—but most of all, when combined with such sublime subjects as those in which he has aimed at rivalling M. Angelo, now removed to Munich. Of white, he introduced in general a very small quantity, and that almost lowered to a dove, or lilac tint, giving a preference in brightness to the carnations of his females. Like Titian's, his second tones are generally a light grey, and seem intermingled with the flesh-tints to check their too great warmth; the reds are placed triangularly near the light, in masses of different shapes and hues; the greens, in small quantities, are generally introduced as foils to the flesh-tints; the third and fourth tints are yellow-browns, which form a large part of his pictures, chequered with small quantities of grey, and his strongest masses of dark are generally blue or black. The "Rape of the Sabines," in the National Gallery, is an instance of this treatment. In this picture, a

larger portion of green is brought forward, to cool the profuse quantity of red, which is everywhere displayed. Here too, is introduced the black dress, to increase the compass and force of his chiaroscuro. On quitting this great man, I may here remark, that the systematic character of his works, which renders them less interesting to persons of a refined taste, is however that which makes them invaluable as subjects of study for the artist. His principles are more apparent and intelligible than those of any other painter,—you more easily trace the motives which guided him,—and his technical skill, if rather too obvious and intrusive, is at the same time unrivalled.

In the enumeration of able colourists, Vandyke is well entitled to a high station, and some of the best of his works are happily to be found in this country.

His “Charles the First on Horseback,” in the Royal collection at Windsor, may be considered one of the finest equestrian portraits extant. The colour, in general, is exquisitely pure, and conducted a good deal on

the principle of Titian ; the red and yellow are supported by a great breadth of warm brown colours, and though there is a considerable quantity of grey which is beautifully managed, the blue masses in the sky and in the scarf tell distinctly as the counterbalancing cold hues of the picture. He has infused a great portion of brown into the shadows of the green curtain, which unites it with the architecture, and makes out the harmony. The focus of chiaroscuro is happily thrown into the cuirass, carrying the eye up towards the head, which, by its fine colour and admirable expression, at once fixes the attention. Vandyke's "Theodosius excommunicated" (now in the National Gallery) presents a very effective system of colour and chiaroscuro. The background and architecture spread a large portion of grey behind the figures, against which are placed the Emperor, in a bright red mantle, and St. Ambrose, in his episcopal robe of light yellow, figured with a deep blue. To this still greater richness is given by the opposition of the boy in a white surplice, which



forms the principal mass of light; the white sleeve of a priest behind carries it on, and is ingeniously contrived to relieve and give point to the sunburnt head of Theodosius; the yellow and brown tints on the other figures and the dog, and faintly spread on the steps, serve further to check the quantity of grey, and the deep shadows of the figures on the left finely balance the *chiaroscuro*. This distinct arrangement of the warm and cold tints produces great brilliance, though it may be doubted if there is not, after all, rather too great a prevalence of the leaden hue, into which this great artist occasionally fell. Perhaps this may fairly be ascribed to the use of some pigment which has become more opaque and cold from time. Some of his historical pictures at Antwerp strongly suggest this opinion; in these, the greys appear to have been formed of white, mixed with the brown earth which goes by his name, and are become so heavy in their tones as materially to injure the beauty of the colouring.

In the truth and purity with which he

imitated the hues of his model, no one has exceeded Rembrandt. Of his skill in combining and arranging a variety of colours in an extensive composition, he has not often given us an opportunity of judging; the "Guard-house," at Amsterdam, is less satisfactory in this respect than many of his smaller works. The colour of Rembrandt is always rich, and blended in a peculiar manner with his chiaroscuro. The "Joseph and Potiphar's Wife," lately in the painting school, to which I alluded in my last, is a very beautiful specimen of both,—the lights are glowing, and finely modulated, and as they contain a considerable portion of red, he has counterbalanced them by a background chiefly of green,—lively, but not crude; his brightest colour is sparingly employed, to give zest to particular points. The extended light of the bed is of a low warm tone, which is made to appear white and brilliant by the quantity of rich dark about it, and from there being nothing else so like white in the picture. The red dress of the female is of a beautiful tint, and

finely harmonized. Many of Rembrandt's portraits in this country, particularly those in the Grosvenor Gallery, are admirable for their tone, effect, and truth.

The science and practice of colouring may be fairly said to have maintained itself with undiminished power in these latter days. Our own school, with whatever deficiencies it may be charged, may boast of having produced very distinguished talent in this department of painting. Holbein, Rubens, and Vandyke perhaps led the way to the knowledge of colour among us; but it is to the first President of this Academy, Sir Joshua Reynolds, that we are immediately indebted for an insight into its true principles (as, indeed, into those of the art in general). Naturally possessed of an exquisite relish for colour as well as an eye of peculiar delicacy, he had diligently studied in the continental schools those works which were most remarkable for harmony and effect. Correggio, the Venetians, the Dutch, and Flemish all contributed to form him as a colourist; he seems to have thoroughly

appreciated and discriminated their various styles, and to have early learned to rival their best examples. He imitated successfully the veiled splendour of Titian; and, by lowering the scale of his colour, added to its brightness, supporting it with a depth of chiaroscuro equal to Rembrandt, a more varied management and less apparent artifice. In rendering the true effects of light, in the beauty and suavity of his hues, in breadth, unity, and force, no less than in his refined taste and feeling, he may rank with the greatest colourists that the art has produced. Though constantly recurring to Nature, he never allowed too close an adherence to the individualities of his model to interfere with the true idea of Nature developed in the works of the most admired masters. Many examples of his powerful skill will readily occur to my hearers. The glowing colour of his "Iphigenia," in the royal collection (lately, by her Majesty's gracious permission, in the painting school), happily remains in such a state of preservation as enables us to judge of its original

perfection. We may regret that the same cannot be said of that once exquisite example of colour and effect, his "Holy Family," in the National Gallery. His portraits are too numerous and well known to need any comment. The "Marlborough Family," one of his most extensive works, gives us an opportunity of judging of his arrangements on a larger scale. In this he seems to have adopted the general principles of Titian and Rubens, but with a greater breadth and force of chiaroscuro than the first, and far more of purity than the second. Here the blue robe of the Garter furnishes him with his strongest dark, and the bright red curtains spread his warm middle tints through the picture, and give great delicacy to the carnations. His discrimination of the principal classes or styles of colour, as well as the many other valuable observations which he has made on the technical part of the art (in his notes on Du Fresnoy), will no doubt be carefully considered by the student, and treasured up in his memory.

It has been sometimes inculcated that the

warm colours should always be placed in the front, or foreground objects, as having a tendency to impress the eye more strongly, or to come more forward than the cold ; but union and harmony require that some intermixture of warm colour should be thrown into the background, and of cold into the front ; and in confirmation of this opinion, we may observe that many of the pictures in which the contrary principle has been adopted (such as the "Notte," the "Magdalen," and the "Christ in the Garden," of Correggio ; Titian's "Christ Crowned with Thorns," and others), have afforded as general delight as any that could be named. Rubens, in the cathedral at Antwerp, has, for the sake of contrast and variety, painted, in one of the side pictures of the great altar-piece, a female saint in a grey drapery against a mass of brown rock, and on the other side St. Paul in brown, against a blue sky. Some of the most admired portraits of Vandyke are treated in the same way ; and I may add Gainsborough's "Blue Boy," in the Grosvenor collection. In

Nature, we often see these cold colours, as they are called, near, and warmer colours at a distance, without being offended; and it would seem from the above instances, among hundreds which might be cited, that they require only judicious management to make them agreeable in art. The effect of the whole would seem to depend on the quantity and opposition of warm tones necessary to counterbalance the cold, and make the harmony, the true effect being the result of their combination.

In portraiture, the dress generally gives the leading and predominant tone of the picture; and perhaps any tint whatever, warm or cold, may be adopted for that purpose, and made agreeable, if duly balanced and distributed. The black dress of Rubens, in the midst of bright tints, while it gives depth to the chiaroscuro, adds richness to all the colours it opposes, and sobriety to the whole.

Titian sometimes made use of a low white or grey dress, set off by warm tones, the converse of the same principle. Rey-

nolds occasionally placed a white dress against a light grey sky, with very little positive colour, and produced a pleasing effect by breadth and hue. Vandyke's half-length portrait of Queen Henrietta, in the Royal collection, is a fine specimen of the same kind of treatment. The general aspect is grey and silvery; the only positive colour in it consists of a little red, which is sprinkled as it were on the stomacher, and a small red flower in the hair (acting like the red cap in some of Teniers's grey pictures, which preserves the whole from coldness. A beautiful picture by Rubens, at Antwerp, of "St. Anne teaching the Virgin to read," is on the same principle. But in fact, the different modes in which the colours may be arranged with effect, and the variety of keys in which they may be modulated, seem to admit of no limitations. They may be raised to the most vivid and gorgeous, or subdued to the most delicate tones, according to the nature of the subject—may be reduced almost to chiaroscuro, or glow with all the hues of the prism. The picture may



be made effective, either by the simplicity or by the richness of its harmony; and accompanied, as it were, by a single instrument or a whole band. The skill of the master is to be seen as advantageously in the one as in the other, and his most bewitching effects will often be produced, like those of the musician, in a minor key, which in both arts is particularly suited to the pathetic. In the earlier works of Titian, Garofalo, and others of the Venetian and Ferrarese schools, a great intensity of colour seems to have been aimed at, emulating the "storied windows richly dight" of our Gothic cathedrals; and a similar practice is to be found in the oil-pictures of Van Eyck, and the old German schools, from which it was probably derived.

Titian, as his taste improved, quitted this gaudy manner, making his blues a distinct counterbalance to a general diffusion of warm and rich, but not florid colour; and from the practice of all the great colourists, it appears that a considerable portion of negative hues is always necessary to set off

the more positive ; for brilliance, if attempted everywhere, becomes ineffective, from the want of opposition ; alternations of excitement and repose are a sort of rhythm, indispensable in every part of the art, and, where sentiment is aimed at, a very small portion of vivid colour can be safely introduced. Hence, broken or subdued colours form the larger part of all fine pictures. They are serviceable either to oppose or reconcile the leading colours of the picture, to vary the tones of the lights, and add to the harmony, and even brightness of the whole. For this purpose, great use may be made of reflections. Warm tints may thus be introduced to check and keep in tune those which are in themselves rather too cold, and *vice versâ*. By this principle, the extremes of both may be brought together, and a kind of transparency obtained in the colouring, which is always desirable. Care, however, must be taken that these reflections are not overdone, or the picture will lose solidity and substance, and become diaphanous. An artifice of the same kind, is the

adoption of draperies shot with threads of opposite colours, very frequent in the Herculeum pictures, and occasionally used by Raffaele, Poussin, and Rubens, which, when well managed, is capable of very brilliant and pleasing results.

Contrast is the source of all character and effect in colour, as in every other division of the art. No tint will appear very bright, unless set off by an opponent, and by this treatment effect may be given to any; but the shadows must all partake of the same negative tone, and that should be the natural antagonist of the general hue of the light, which again must be gently diffused over the local colours, in order to tinge them with the same atmosphere, and give truth and union to the whole. In the works of the finest colourists, particularly in those of Correggio, there is a gradual variation from warm to cold tones, as well as from light to dark, while the extremes of both are economized, and have their more decided points of antithesis; and this modulation or rhythm is one great cause of the suavity and breadth

for which he is remarkable. The general tone of colour to be adopted for a picture, together with its chiaroscuro, is the music to which the composition is set, and should always accord with and arise out of the character of the subject. This has naturally some fixed and inherent circumstance, some indispensable demand, which must first be attended to; as whether it be simple or rich, playful or grave,—whether it derive its light from the freshness of the morning or the glow of evening,—the quality or costume of the principal characters, &c. Something of this kind will generally suggest the key in which the harmony is to be evolved, and lead to all the rest.

Thus, if there be a necessity for clothing the principal figure in red, that must be supported by congenial tints, carried on in some part by a smaller repetition of nearly the same tint, and set off and harmonized by a portion of the antagonist, or complementary colour, more or less positive, as Reynolds has shewn in speaking of Vandyrke's "Cardinal Bentivoglio." And this

general principle is applicable to all the various classes of painting, from a portrait, or single figure, to the most complicated history.

Having now referred to the practice of the most eminent masters in colour, and endeavoured to illustrate their general principles with regard to inventive or ideal colouring, it would be useless to call your attention to any examples of less acknowledged excellence. I shall therefore conclude with remarking, that though Reynolds, with true judgment (and great impartiality towards an element of painting in which he so much excelled), has pointed out the ambitious nature of colour, and its tendency to absorb every other quality of the art, yet it is equally certain, that when regulated by taste and feeling, colour will be often found capable, in a powerful degree, of expanding the poetical sentiment of the work, and of interesting the imagination and affections no less than in delighting the sense.

## LECTURE V.

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COMPOSITION.

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MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,—

WHEN the student has gained some facility in the making out of forms, and understands the general principles of chiaro-scuro and colour, his next endeavour should be to obtain a knowledge of composition, or the power of applying those original elements of the art in the construction of a picture. The composition of a picture is hardly separable from the poetical conception, of which it is the technical exponent. In its larger meaning it includes the arrangement of the whole work with all its parts,—the contrivance and disposition of whatever is introduced upon the canvass ; but, in the more usual and limited acceptation of the

term, it implies the distribution, or ordonnance of the figures; to which view of it I shall at present chiefly confine myself.

In my first Lecture I pointed out generally what appear to me the natural boundaries of invention in painting. With regard to the choice of subject, I think the artist's fancy should be wholly unshackled; and I will observe, that in adopting a theme from poetry, history, or whatever source, it should be always calculated to give an agreeable stimulus to the imagination or affections, and afford opportunity for displaying to advantage the peculiar powers and resources of the art. It should admit of being translated into the language of painting, without losing any of its original interest, otherwise the artist, while paying homage to the genius of the poet or the historian, may expose his own inferiority, and help to discredit his muse; and, if not of that elevated character usually selected by our great predecessors, its moral tendency should at least be unimpeachable. The representation of any event in painting

being necessarily confined to an instantaneous view of it, the particular moment at which the action may be brought before us is obviously of the first importance. This selection, indeed, may almost be said to constitute the subject, for on this the success of its elucidation mainly depends. A few preliminary remarks on this head may therefore be desirable. This strict and narrow limitation of time presents such difficulties in the way of telling a story, that it would seem impossible to overcome them, had not experience shewn, that when the true moment has been happily chosen, the subject may be made sufficiently intelligible to the cultivated spectator, and the picture so managed, as even to recall the traces of what has just happened, and give a hint of what is about to follow. I say sufficiently intelligible, for though it is important that the spectator should be able to make out the meaning of a picture as fully as possible, without further information, yet that advantage must not be obtained at the expense of unity, decorum, or any of the higher aims



of the work. Poussin, who excelled in this explanatory power, and always made great efforts to tell his story clearly, has sometimes, by accumulating too many circumstances for that purpose, clogged or debased the character of his composition, and weakened its impression. In his design of "Christ before Pilate" (engraved by Stella) he has contrived an opening in the wall, through which you see a female sending a messenger to Pilate on his tribunal; intending, no doubt, to express the recommendation of his wife, "Have thou nothing to do with that just man." This, though ingenious, is not very effective, because, after all, the purport of the message does not appear; and though it serve to bring that point of the history to our recollection, it disturbs the solemnity of the scene, and diverts the attention from what is interesting and necessary, to a circumstance which might be omitted without disadvantage. It makes the picture narrative rather than poetical. The proper aim of the subject is much better attained by Rembrandt, in his treatment of the same

event (commented on by Fuseli),—" Pilate washing his Hands," shews at once that he yields up the accused to the fury of the Jews, while he is convinced of his innocence. This is much more affecting and worthy of the art; the point of time is here admirably chosen, and the story very effectually conveyed to the mind.

No one has been more habitually successful in this respect than Raffaello. The " Sacrifice of Lystra " has been remarked as an instance of his skill in selecting the true moment when his subject teemed with the greatest interest, and bringing before us all that was essential without disturbing the unity of the work. Nothing can be more felicitous than the mode in which he has expressed the cure of the cripple, from which all the circumstances of the scene have arisen.

The " Death of Ananias " is another fine instance of the same expressive power, though the unity of this work is rather more questionable. The episodes, however, materially contribute to explain the cause of the

sudden vengeance of Heaven, which, called down by the apostle, has so evidently struck its victim to the ground, and, if not sufficient in themselves to tell the story completely, their connection with the event is apparent, and they at once suggest it to those who are acquainted with the Scripture (which is in general all that the art can or need accomplish); but they are still perhaps overpowering, and occupy the eye somewhat more than is desirable.

From these instances it will be obvious how closely the invention of the picture is connected with the composition, and how important it is that the point of time selected should be that in which the event is so poised between the past and future as to afford the greatest number of circumstances favourable to its effect. With regard to the choice of subject, Mr. Fuseli, in his second Lecture on invention, has discriminated between the favourable and the unfavourable; but it may be remarked that some of the finest pictures in the world are drawn from the latter class.

When the artist has carefully weighed the capabilities of his theme, and settled his general plan of treatment, he may begin to dispose of his *dramatis personæ* in the most convenient manner for the performance of their respective parts, which is the essence of expressive composition. And here it is indispensable that he thoroughly identify himself with his subject, that he may be able to impart to others the feelings which it has excited in himself. He must endeavour to see the whole in his mind's eye before he begin to transfer it to his canvass, and imagine the positions and movements of all the figures, by which he is to make them appear to act and think with propriety according to their several characters, age, sex, or condition. For the groundwork of the science of arrangement, we should have recourse, as often as possible, to Nature herself, who is ever presenting us with an inexhaustible variety of characteristic actions and picturesque groupes, from the most simple and tranquil to the most intricate and energetic. This is the only

source of true expression, for here every actor is perfect in his part, and unconsciously forwarding the drama, without effort or affectation ; accordingly, it has been the school from which all the great original artists have derived their excellence.

But though composition is founded on the natural modes in which figures congregate and arrange themselves under the various circumstances of life, yet as in all the other divisions of the art, taste and feeling must guide the artist in seizing upon what is most emphatic, or effective, in the materials afforded by the subject, which must be combined and arranged with all the simplicity and nature consistent with the demands of art. Every part must be considered with relation to the rest, and to the unity of the whole, and should co-operate in giving intelligibility to the story, in developing its most striking and particular features, and all the interest, poetical and technical, or artistic, that can with propriety be brought together in that single moment of time which he has selected. Usually it is desir-

able to treat a subject with few figures ; in proportion as they fill the canvass, and exclude what is unimportant, the design will be the more grand and impressive. This was always the aim of the great masters. Annibal Caracci thought that when more than twelve were admitted into a composition, there must be some "to be let." As a general principle this suggestion deserves attention (particularly in dramatic painting), but no precepts are to be too literally construed ; and even in that class of art, it may sometimes be desirable to employ a greater number, and introduce personages who are little more than spectators, or concerned in some by-play.

Episodes may occasionally be permitted in all pictures, for the sake of variety or explanation ; but they must never be so prominent, or attractive, as to interfere with the main action ; on the contrary, there should always be some apparent necessity for them ; for if they do not promote the interest, they will be sure to weaken it. In epic works, the dictum of

Caracci will scarcely apply. A great number of figures impress us with a feeling of grandeur, on an opposite principle to that which arises from simplicity: they excite and fill the mind. We cannot but perceive that a part of the appalling grandeur of the "Last Judgment" arises from the vast assembly congregated before us. We think we see the whole human race brought before its Judge. And the "School of Athens" derives a very imposing effect from the number and dignity of its characters. Complex pictures, however, are generally less impressive than those with few figures.

To return to composition:—The first practical point to be determined, is the general form of the canvass, or panel, which may be most suitable to the treatment of the story—whether vertical or horizontal, round or square, &c. This is far from unimportant, as the composition may be said to grow out of it. In places where a particular compartment is to be filled, and both the shape and size of his work are prescribed, the artist has to compose his

design within certain limits and restrictions, which is always a test of skill ; but as “all impediments in fancy’s course are motives to more fancy,” men of taste and ingenuity have not unfrequently taken advantage of these accidents, and produced original and beautiful inventions, in consequence of such restraints. Such are many of the designs of M. Angelo in the Sistine chapel, of Raffaele in the Farnesina, and of Paul Veronese in the ducal palace at Venice, which have been suggested or influenced by the spaces they were to occupy. A necessity for carrying upwards a composition, to fill a lofty compartment, led the Venetians to introduce columns going out of the picture ; the heavens opening, and a celestial chorus looking down upon the martyr, or personages assembled below. This necessity too may partly account for the number of Crucifixions, Assumptions, Resurrections, and other vertical works which decorate the lofty walls of churches on the continent ; as Raffaele’s “ Battle of Constantine ” is spread longitudinally to fill one side of a



vast hall. In smaller works, the shape of the canvass is usually adapted to the subject, and the number and nature of the figures it requires. In many of these, character is often gained by a judicious preference of the vertical, or the horizontal form,

Another preliminary consideration is the ground plan on which the figures are to be disposed. This admits of great diversity. In the "Last Supper," and in the "Draught of Fishes," the pictures are almost on the same plane as in basso-relievo. In the "St. Paul Preaching at Athens," and the "Elymas," the plan is semicircular, which is a very usual arrangement with Raffaello. In the "Ananias," and many other of his works, it is completely circular.

The choice in this respect will chiefly depend on the best mode in which the due importance of the principal figures can be preserved. In a "Last Supper," by Raffaello, in the Loggia of the Vatican, the circular arrangement has not a happy effect, the figures in front becoming more important, from their superior size and strong action,

than the Saviour himself; the perspective is too violent, and the calm and pathetic dignity of the subject injured in consequence. In general, as many planes have been thought desirable as may well be introduced; they add richness and intricacy without destroying simplicity. Another desideratum is, that the general form of a composition assumes somewhat of a regular, or geometrical, figure, as the square, the triangle, the circle. M. Angelo is said to have preferred a triangular, or pyramidal, form, with a serpentine line running through the midst, from the base to the apex. This, of course, will not always be applicable; it is sufficient that the general shape have a positive distinctness of character, which will be the best suggested by the subject. The immediate agents, or appliances, in technical composition, are lines, quantities, and grouping. By lines, are to be understood the direction, or sweep, of the more conspicuous forms, or human figures of the design: of these, the picture on my left,\* from Rubens,

\* A copy of the "Taking down from the Cross."

will presently supply us with an excellent illustration. The value of lines has always been strongly felt in the best times of art, as we find in the basso-relievos and gems of the ancients, and in all the works of the great painters and sculptors of the Cinque Cento. Their use is to link the parts together, and lead the eye agreeably through the picture. They form the melody of the work, and in all composition should arise out of the particular occasion, and be flowing and graceful, or more direct and abrupt, as may suit the character of the subject. They have not unfrequently been carried to excess and mannerism, particularly in the Florentine School, and in the postures of Pellegrino Tibaldi; those of M. Angelo, John di Bologna, and Parmegiano, are not always exempt from this fault; and I cannot forbear mentioning an instance in which it appears to me that even Raffaello has courted them somewhat too obviously. His cartoon of the "Murder of the Innocents" (bequeathed by Mr. Prince Hoare to the Foundling Hospital, but lately transferred

to the National Gallery) is full of fine action and expression, and of all his usual excellences, in spite of the injuries it has undergone, and its miserable present condition; but the lines are wound about so artificially through the composition, as to resemble a true lover's knot; and the eye is invited to admire and dwell upon their elegance and harmony, when the heart should be roused to emotions of pity, terror, and indignation.

In the relievo of the "Destruction of the Niobe Family" (so lately presented to your notice), which is a parallel subject, there is no such attempt at a melodious flow of lines; they are highly studied and exciting, full of contrast, not deficient in harmony; but pathos, energy, and simplicity prevail throughout. I shall have occasion, in the course of my Lecture, to return frequently to the notice of lines and their value.

What are technically called the quantities in painting, are the greater divisions and subdivisions of the design.

Composition implies the putting together

of parts so as to constitute a whole ; but the parts or divisions must be distinct, or there will be no apparent composition ; they must combine in one scheme, and to one end, or they will not be a whole. To produce an agreeable effect, every part must bear a varied and proportionate relation to all the rest. If the masses or divisions are too equal, the effect will be monotonous and insipid ; if too much subdivided, unity will be destroyed ; and without proportion there will be neither harmony nor appearance of intention, which to a certain degree is essential in every work of art with a certain rhythm. Every subject that we may select will probably suggest some appropriate division of the figures. For instance, in the "Delivery of the Keys to Peter," the propriety of dividing the composition, as Raffaele has done, into two distinct portions, making a separation between the master and his disciples, strikes us at once. Had he placed Christ in the centre, surrounded by the Apostles, besides that it would have been less decorous, and perhaps

at variance with the feelings of awe which must have possessed them while receiving the solemn charge, the composition would have lost that grand simplicity and distinctness, which stamps such character upon this justly admired work. The general shape of the groupe of the Apostles is a square, which is contrasted with the columnar figure of the Saviour in an agreeable proportion. Within this the subdivisions and planes are finely varied, and the kneeling figure of Peter, advancing a little, connects the whole together. This division of a subject into two chief masses, is the most simple and striking principle of effect in composition. We have another fine instance of it in M. Angelo's "Creation of Adam." Here, without the addition of the angels, the masses of Adam and his Maker would have been too equal; but by representing his cherubim as children, he has given a further variety in the quantities, as well as majesty and sublimity to the Creator. In the "Draught of Fishes," a different mode of arrangement was necessary, and unity is

preserved by linking the figures together in an harmonious chain, which undulates across the picture, each having its own requisite action and character. The Christ, whose quiet dignity opposes so finely the exertions of the other figures, forms a separate mass; Peter, another of a different quantity and shape, but near enough to connect with that of the two stooping sons of Zebedee; and the smaller quantity of the Father terminates the whole. This sort of rhythm, or modulation, adds much to the beauty of all composition. "The intended Sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas, at Lystra," is perhaps less agreeable than either of those works I have just adverted to. The story required a crowd, and, in consequence, precluded that simplicity which renders the others so impressive; a different principle of effect was therefore resorted to—that of intricacy. Character is obtained in the two first by a quiet solemnity, and in this by bustle and energy. In "Paul Preaching at Athens," an imposing effect is produced by the distinctness, dignity, and striking allocation of

the principal figure, and the union which arises from the happy perspective, arrangement and subordination of his audience. All these works are well studied in their quantities. I proceed to speak of grouping.

The groupe is that close kind of arrangement which combines two or more figures in a single mass, and when finely treated, has always been considered the most perfect mode of composition; indeed it comprises all its principles, and is an epitome of beautiful and effective combination; for the groupe should be subdivided by harmonious lines and well-balanced quantities, and should contain such a portion of variety and contrast, intricacy or simplicity, as may best agree with the character of the subject.

A composition, according to its extent, may consist of several groupes, or be limited to one; but however numerous, they must be conducted on the same principle, and still be proportionate parts of one whole. We see the impressive effect of a single groupe in "The Taking Down from the Cross," of Rubens; while in the "School



of Athens," we are struck with the grandeur arising from the symmetrical arrangement of a multitude of figures thrown into detached groupes, balancing each other, and so connected as to form an entire composition. Grouping, though liable to become artificial, unless organized by feeling and taste, is strictly founded on Nature, as we may convince ourselves by looking at any time into the highways and streets, from whence the best artists have drawn some of their happiest inventions. It is to be regretted that we do not possess any extensive specimens of the excellence of the ancients in this department of our art, but their sculptors having been so thoroughly skilled in the more limited principles of composition, we cannot reasonably doubt that their painters were equally so. That they were not a little critical on this point, appears from Pliny's remark, that Apelles was considered inferior to Amphion in disposition,—meaning, as I conceive, the ordonnance of the figures. The great simplicity with which the Greeks were satisfied, and the

perfection they aimed at in the details of their works, may have prevented them from engaging in any very extensive compositions ; at least, the subjects they are recorded to have painted seldom consist of many figures.

As we cannot refer to any ancient pictures of importance to illustrate this part of my subject, I must, at the risk of trenching in a slight degree upon the province of the professor of sculpture, have recourse to his art for some specimens of the admirable skill of the Greeks in this element of design.

When Sir J. Reynolds expressed an opinion that the ancients were probably deficient in composition as compared with the moderns, it is clear that he adverted to that more extensive sense of the term which includes the whole contrivance of a picture ; but in its more usual limitation, or at least in that view of it which I am at present taking (the ordonnance of the figures), they have shewn the most consummate taste and judgment, and have carried it to the same degree of excellence which they had achieved in style. I consider this sufficiently

proved by the relievo of the "Niobe Family" (before referred to), which though coarse in execution, and evidently a copy made by some ordinary hand, is not inferior in composition, as well as in sentiment and expression, to any thing extant. The figures are so admirably contrasted in their lines and quantities, so well divided, and yet linked together; the attitudes so skilfully varied, animated, and true, that the original could only have been the production of one of the greatest sculptors of antiquity; and I cannot refer the student to any better illustration of the principles I am endeavouring to explain.

It is to the high opinion which our excellent Flaxman entertained of this work, that the Academy is indebted for possessing a fine cast of it, the only one, I believe, in England. It was moulded in Rome, by his direction, and sent over to Romney the painter.

Having mentioned the name of Flaxman, I cannot but refer the student to the beautiful designs of this great master in composition, as deserving his utmost attention.

“The Shield of Achilles,”\* his most consummate work, is the glory of modern sculpture. Nor can I omit to point out that highly poetical invention of his rival, Banks, “Thetis rising to console Achilles,”† in which the exquisite harmony of lines, and graceful motion in the females, are so finely contrasted with the rigid, energetic action, and noble style of the Achilles. In any era of art, this would have been considered a composition of singular felicity. To return to the ancients—the groupes of the “Laocoon,” the “Boxers,” “Menelaus with the Body of Patroclus,” the female figures from the pediment of the Parthenon, and the frieze from the same temple (now in the British Museum), evince abundantly their admirable power of combination ; and among their gems, a great number of exquisite examples of taste and science in lines and grouping are to be found, which will repay the painter’s most careful study.

\* Designed and modelled by Flaxman to be executed in silver by Messrs. Rundell and Bridge.

† Now in the National Gallery.

It was from the specimens of ancient sculpture which had happily outlived its ruin, that the revivers of painting in modern Italy acquired their first notions of composition, as well as of style, in which they gradually advanced, as the basso-relievos, groupes, and statues of better days were again brought to light.

Of Raffaelle's arabesque ornaments in the Loggie of the Vatican, which are filled with graceful inventions, many of the most beautiful groupes and figures are copied from antique gems, and from paintings discovered in the sepulchres of the ancients.

I do not propose to follow the progressive steps of composition through this period, but I shall content myself with remarking on the works of some of those great men who, towards the middle of the fifteenth century, seem to have fully penetrated into its arcana,—to have discovered the value of lines, proportionate quantities, concatenation or grouping, contrast and harmony, and to have carried this branch of the art to its height.

Some of the productions of Luca Signorelli, in the Duomo at Orvieto, had, no doubt, suggested to M. Angelo much of that grandeur and energy which he imparted to his own groupes and single figures, and he must also have derived many fine inspirations from the works of Donatello, at Florence, which have in them the very soul of expression. But he carried much further than either the power of grouping, and the science of arrangement and combination. The Sistine Chapel is an inexhaustible mine of study for the artist in this respect. "The Temptation of Adam and Eve" is combined with their expulsion from Eden in a vigorous and masterly style of composition, which had never been seen before his time. In this, the concatenation of lines, formed by the arms of the different figures, is beautiful, and the crime linked with the punishment in a manner no less striking than harmonious. This mode of bringing together in one design different parts of the same story was, perhaps, suggested to him by some ancient basso-relievos, where we find

the histories of Jason, Meleager, and others thus treated. From its concentration and unity, it is a fine principle, and especially adapted to the monumental style, wherein art is most abstract and spiritual.

“ The Elevation of the Brazen Serpent ” is another striking example of concentrated and effective arrangement. But every mode and variety of composition is to be found in that prodigy of skill and power, “ The Last Judgment.” It may be doubted whether in the whole compass of ancient art so vast an assemblage of figures as this was ever to be found, where the greatest science is brought in aid of the richest invention and the most terrific expression. The struggling groupes of fiends and mortals, in particular, have never been equalled for energetic action and ingenious combination. The prints in the library and the lectures of Fuseli will sufficiently prepare those students who wish to become acquainted (and all should be acquainted) with this highest effort of art in its highest class. Of his early and celebrated composition, the car-

toon of Pisa, we are enabled, I conceive, to form a very tolerable judgment from the copy of it, by Sangallo, at Holkham, which probably contains all the foreground figures. Schiavonetti's engraving from this interesting relic, though finely wrought, is less faithful in style than might be wished. The eloquent commentary of Fuseli on this work must be known to you all. With respect to the invention and expression, chiaroscuro and colour, of the great work of Lionardo above me I have already spoken; but, as among its surprising merits composition is not the least, I would now call your attention to the arrangement of the figures. Painted for the refectory of a convent, and confined to a particular space, occupying the whole width of the room over a door, Lionardo adopted the plan of extending his table entirely across it, making the white cloth a bond of union to the whole, and this gives great value also to the bright colours and richly-varied details above. I may here observe, that in all compositions of a grand or extensive character, some portion of



symmetry and softened formality is desirable. The subject, in this instance, required that the Apostles should be placed six on each side, and the Saviour in the midst. At each extremity of the table are three figures (more separated than those next to them), which are combined in two close and varied groupings. One of these is more connected than the other with the principal figure, which gives due predominance to the central mass and prevents the composition from appearing too positively divided into triads. The heads are at unequal distances, and form in themselves an agreeable waving line. There is an ingenious modulation in the arms and in the conduct of all the hands; every figure presents a different quantity; and the principal line being horizontal, the forms above it are contrived to pass from one end to the other in a sort of zig-zag or undulating chain. It would be difficult to point out a more perfect specimen of intricate grouping than that of Peter, Judas, and John: Peter stretching over Judas with the impetuosity belonging to his character, addresses himself

to the affectionate John, who (his hands clasped in grief) inclines towards him ; Judas leans back to support himself, and assumes the firmness and surprise of innocence. Here all the principles of effect are combined : the strongest contrast of position and expression, with the most complete union, while the whole seems momentary and accidental. This with another groupe, as energetic and almost as fine, on the other side, are happily opposed to the calm resignation of the Saviour, producing great richness and effect in the centre, and a fine alternation of action and repose throughout. Nothing is neglected in this profound work, which, from the variety of its excellences, may be esteemed a school in itself.

The compositions of Raffaele have often so artless an appearance, that they look as if he had found them in Nature, and sketched them on the spot. Some of these I have already noticed. His scripture histories in the Loggie of the Vatican (engravings of which are in the library), afford numerous and beautiful examples of composition,

uniting (with energy, grace, and expression in the individual figures) all the principles of scientific arrangement, and the most ingenious contrivances for telling the story. Among these designs, I will point out a few of the more striking. There is, perhaps, none finer than that of "Joseph relating his Dreams." Joseph stands in the midst, with one hand on his breast, and the other pointing to his brethren, who are collected about him. The two circular representations of the sheaves of corn, and the sun, moon, and stars introduced above, are hieroglyphics (before noticed) which explain the story. The plan is circular. The figures are particularly graceful and natural, divided into unequal masses, beautifully grouped and rounded, and connected by a recumbent figure on one side, and the seemingly trifling circumstance of an extended staff on the other.

"The Deluge," in the same series, is finely conceived and treated. The main line of figures crosses the canvass in a sort of chain, as in the cartoon of "Christ calling the Sons of Zebedee." A family, consisting

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of an aged man on horseback ; another in the prime of life, supporting his wife ; a father, carrying one child, and drawing along another by the hair, are wading a stream with difficulty and exertion ;—at some distance, a number of persons sheltering themselves under a tent from the torrents of rain descending, while the ark is dimly seen floating in the distance. The story could not be more successfully told, on the same scale, nor the arrangement be more expressive.

To enumerate all the fine compositions of Raffaello, would be to give a complete catalogue of his works, which would be useless here, were it possible. But I am tempted to advert to a series of designs from the fable of Cupid and Psyche, which go by the name of this great artist. That they are compositions in all respects worthy of him (however their beauty is disguised or impaired by the engravers) cannot be disputed ; nay, they present some groupes which surpass any thing he has done from the same subject in the Farnesina. They are not, however, mentioned by Vasari, nor I believe,

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any other writer, as among his works, and hence a doubt has been entertained whether they are rightly ascribed to him. It has been suggested, but from mere conjecture, that they are the inventions of Balthazar Peruzzi. At any rate, they well deserve the attentive consideration of the student. He will find them abound in expressive figures, and the happiest groupings, conceived and arranged in the true spirit of the great painter whose name they bear; and they afford a useful example of the treatment of one story in an extensive series of designs, which affords an artist the best, or only opportunity to develop all the resources of composition.

Correggio generally composed his works with reference to their picturesque effect and harmony, rather than to those principles of arrangement which I have been endeavouring to explain. His cupolas at Parma, however, are splendid proofs of his great skill in the ordonnance of a number of figures, though the foreshortening (*di sotto in su*) is too often less agreeable than daring. His

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picture of a Holy Family, in which the Madonna and Child are seated on the ground, and Joseph is gathering dates from a palm-tree, with angels hovering above, is a beautiful combination of figures, and a fine illustration of the melody of lines. But I proceed to Rubens, whose powers of composition were of the first order. His fine work "The Taking down from the Cross," a copy from which is beside you, may be cited as a very splendid example of the powerful effect of a single groupe. The lines flow diagonally through the picture from top to bottom, that of the principal figure being the longest, which is still farther extended by the linen in which it is wrapped, carried out by the half-figure at top, and combined with the kneeling Magdalen below. This main serpentine line, which illustrates M. Angelo's axiom, is supported on one side by the large masses of St. John and the figure descending the ladder; on the other side, smaller portions of figures, finely varied, oppose the central stream of form, presenting altogether a beautiful example of concatenation,

full of intricacy, but simple and one. The student will do well to compare this composition with the "Taking down from the Cross" of Daniel da Volterra, which Rubens had, no doubt, well considered when he undertook his picture. The elements of the subject are not entirely new in either, for, independently of the deep importance of the event represented, it affords so fine an occasion for displaying a variety of action, expression, and character, with a contrast of life and death, as to have given rise to several ingenious compositions, though not of equal power with these two, by earlier masters.

Volterra's has already been considered one of the great works of modern painting, and possesses some higher qualities than that of Rubens; it is preferable at least in style and expression, though chargeable with a want of unity, from the introduction of the pathetic groupe of females at the foot of the cross, which divides the interest. Rubens has avoided this, and supplied what the other wants, a fine and appropriate chiaroscuro,

which adds exceedingly to the solemnity of the effect.

In this comparison the student will trace the different operations of mind and feeling in two great artists in their treatment of the same subject, which is always an invaluable opportunity; and he will find the same technical elements of arrangement attended to by both. The scriptural pictures of Rubens in general want the deep sentiment which that class of art above all others imperatively demands. He has sometimes, however, been eminently successful in expression, action, and disposition. Reynolds thought his Christ taken down from the cross, in the picture just mentioned, to be the finest figure that ever was composed, and, considered merely as a dead figure, it is certainly admirable; but it wants a nobler and more definite character. The head is very mean, and might suit better one of the thieves. The Christ of Daniel da Volterra is more dignified, but somewhat vague also.

In Rubens' "Conversion of Saul" (now, I believe, in the collection of Mr. Miles, near



Bristol), Saul, struck with blindness and falling from his horse, is a very perfect piece of expression from head to foot, and more happily conceived than even those which were produced by M. Angelo and Raffaele, in their representations of the same event; the action is at once noble, instantaneous, helpless, and breathes entire submission and resignation to the divine vision. Rubens' great knowledge of the human figure enabled him to throw it into any conceivable position, and his powerful and comprehensive genius led him to appreciate and study M. Angelo for composition, as he had done all his other great predecessors for their respective excellences. His "Hippolytus," at Woburn, is borrowed from the basso-relievo of "Tityus," in the Villa Borghese, by M. Angelo; and he has entered the lists with him in the more tremendous subjects of "The Battle of the Angels," "The Fall of the Damned," and others of the same character, which have been eulogized by Reynolds. These are now at Munich (drawings of them may have been seen by many of my audience

in the collection of Sir Thomas Lawrence). But a comparison of these surprising works with "The Last Judgment" of M. Angelo will infallibly shew the great superiority of the latter. The disgusting circumstances Rubens has introduced in some of these, and the grossness and vulgarity of the style, rendered still more offensive by his florid colouring, entirely prevent those feelings of terror and sublimity which should accompany such subjects, and which the tremendous energy displayed in these compositions tends to excite.

In the hunting-groupes, of which I have before spoken, as founded on Lionardo's "Battle of the Standard," he seems to have been more in his element. The qualities in which he most excelled are there in place, and appear to the greatest advantage; accordingly, these groupes are among the most vigorous, skilful, and effective compositions in painting.

We are fortunate in possessing in our National Gallery two very perfect specimens of composition by Rubens of quite different

characters; I mean the allegorical picture presented to the collection by the late Marquis of Stafford; and the "St. Bavon," formerly belonging to Mr. Holwell Carr. In the first, we find a scientific and even elegant treatment of lines and quantities in the forms, accompanied with a rich picturesque effect and colour, which are entirely appropriate: the grouping of the children is particularly beautiful, and on the principles of the finest composers. He has in this work blended the great style with the ornamental in very suitable degrees.

The "St. Bavon" is on a more extensive scale, and still more admirable. The principal masses are distinct and finely varied and proportioned. The females, on a platform on the left, form one of these; the groupe of mendicants in front another, and the remainder of the panel is filled by a surprising concatenation of figures, which, beginning with the retinue of the hero, on horseback and on foot, in the court before the church, extends up the stairs; by means of the lamps within, the mind is ingeniously

led on to the end of the nave. This numerous assemblage of persons is so artfully distributed, that all have sufficient room, and are placed so exactly where they might be expected to place themselves according to their various conditions, offices, and motives, that they seem to have been sketched from a real scene rather than arranged by art. The actions of all are skilfully but unaffectedly contrasted, particularly on the stairs; the characters are dignified and more expressive than is usual with Rubens, and though he has introduced a good deal of singular German costume, which is rather uncouth, there is so much of nature combined with consummate science, so much of grandeur and effect in the arrangement of the whole, as well as of interest in the parts, that I know of no composition which can justly be preferred to it in the same class of subjects. I might refer the student with propriety to many of the designs of Poussin, as fine instances of scientific ordonnance, some of which may be seen in the National Gallery, and are well worthy of his atten-

tion ; but, after the examples I have adduced, I think it may be more useful to point out to him a few practical observations which those suggest.

Generally, the main lines of a composition should either correspond with its external boundary, like the columns of Paolo Veronese, or contrast it, agreeably with the precept of M. Angelo, as in the diagonal wave of Rubens' "Taking down from the Cross." In the works of the great composers, we often find the expression of the subject much strengthened by a reduplication of lines in nearly the same direction, all slightly varied in length, inclination, and curvature, and suddenly contrasted by a decided line in the opposite direction, as is remarkable in the "Brazen Serpent" of M. Angelo ; a fine instance may also be seen in the "Joshua Staying the Sun" of Raffaello, where a number of soldiers on their knees are thus arranged ; and this accords with a general maxim in all composition, that the greater part of it should be in agreement, or consentaneous, the

smaller part in opposition. This applies, not only to lines, but to warm and cold colours and tones; they must be repeated and spread for the sake of continuity and breadth, and contrasted for the sake of character and effect. It is important that the arrangement of the heads should form an agreeable line, and that they should be more or less varied and inclined, as is perfectly managed in the picture above me. Particular care should be taken in the placing of these, or any other ostensible points of the composition. The aspects of the figures should be as different, also, as the character of the work will properly allow; in some cases it is surprising how little variation will be sufficient. Back figures will often be found invaluable. Raffaello employed them profusely in his pictures in the Loggie, which was a necessary consequence of his fondness for a circular plan; and, when well managed, they give a great artlessness to the arrangement. We see this constantly out of doors, where the actors do not think of the by-

standers; while on the stage, they are often too obviously marshalled for effect, the groupe being necessarily left as open as possible, that all may see what is going on within; this, when it occurs in painting, has generally a theatrical and artificial air. Mr. West's fine composition of "The Death of General Wolfe," somewhat approaches to this; but it arose naturally out of the subject, propriety requiring that the dying hero should not be too much closed in by the attendants.

In his "Battle of La Hogue," a boat in shadow, darting into the picture in front of the admiral, detracts nothing from the importance of the chief, while it is in the highest degree picturesque, and well suited to the bustle and confusion of the scene. Many other instances of excellent composition might be cited from the hand of the same able artist; among others, his "Regulus returning to Carthage," "Tele-machus and Calypso," &c.

Ordonnance appears to have been the leading object to which the great Italian

masters of the Cinque Cento period devoted their powerful energies. Their numerous sketches and studies for the same work shew that they never left untried any adaptation of the materials of their subject which promised a more successful development of its particular intellectual aim, or a happier arrangement; and these labours seem to have preceded any attempt at the introduction of colour.

Rubens, confident in his technical resources, and never fastidious, usually made out his design at once in outline, washing in a slight chiaroscuro in oil-colour, and on this he seems to have found no difficulty in engrafting the most picturesque effects. It is generally one of the tests of a finely-disposed groupe, that it will afford, from its roundness and subordination, a favourable light and shadow. This masterly union, perhaps, no one ever carried so far as himself; while the grand style of ordonnance, which he had imbibed from M. Angelo, Raffaëlle, and Lionardo, often preserves a sort of dignity, and even taste, in his pic-



tures, which the boisterous vulgarity of his figures cannot altogether destroy. Ordinance is less studied now than it was at an earlier period, when it was considered to be one of the great desiderata of Art. In cultivating this essential branch of the grand style, the judicious artist will always bear in mind the value of those important accompaniments, and their high estimation in the present day, and give some thought to colour and chiaroscuro, while studying the ordinance of his design. The same general rules are more or less applicable to all the technical divisions of painting. Agreeable proportions and quantities, grouping, contrast, harmony, are equally regulating principles in the treatment of chiaroscuro, colour, and form, and are all comprehended in the widest sense of the term composition.

## LECTURE VI.

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CONCLUDING LECTURE.

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MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,—

AN important consideration in the composition of a picture is the background, by which term may be understood every thing seen beyond the plane on which the principal figures are arranged. In continuation of the subject of my last Lecture, I proceed, therefore, to offer some remarks on the nature of backgrounds, and on the mode in which they have been treated by the best artists. The poet is relieved from any such demand upon his invention by presenting all the parts of his design in succession, which enables him to bring forward as many accessories as he may think desirable, when and where they may best serve to enrich or

explain it, while he can keep out of sight every thing trivial or unfavourable to his purpose; the musician too may compose a delightful melody without any accompaniment whatever. To the painter alone, a background of some kind is unavoidable; the nature of his art requires him to fill up the intervals of his groupes with some object or other, which he must necessarily suppose to appear beyond his foreground; and whatever he may introduce for this purpose, should at once contribute to relieve his figures, explain the story, and complete the picture, without attracting more attention than its subordinate office may fairly claim. The grand style in a great degree avoids this difficulty, by introducing the least possible background (a sky, a rock, a wall), and few or no accessories; and sculpture, which systematically excludes them, owes much of its impressive character to this mode of treatment.

M. Angelo, a sculptor as well as painter, generally pursued the same course in both arts, and gave his compositions their full and

undisturbed value, by suffering nothing extraneous to interfere with the figures. The ill effect of complex or intricate backgrounds, is conspicuous in two of the cartoons, "The Delivery of the Keys," and "The Miraculous Draught of Fishes," where, in spite of the admirable arrangement of the groupings and their animated characters and expressions, the eye can scarcely forbear wandering over the expanse behind them, instead of resting as it should upon the subject. The scenery is appropriate and pleasing in itself, but is objectionable in overlaying the picture with a multiplicity of details, which add nothing to its interest. In the latter of the two, the birds in the foreground of the lake, from their size and obtrusive situation, challenge nearly as much attention as the human figures themselves.

The background and accessories in our copy of "The Last Supper," though they were hardly to be avoided, detract somewhat from the simplicity and quiet solemnity befitting that sublime drama. It is possible that by dwelling for some minutes

on the great intellectual merits of these admirable works, the mind may abstract itself from such interruptions, but it requires an effort like that which is necessary while reading a book in the midst of a number of persons talking aloud. Sebastian del Piombo's "Raising of Lazarus," in our national collection, the design of which has been ascribed to M. Angelo, is still more offensive in this particular. If any part of it be of M. Angelo's invention besides the principal figure, the background certainly is not; when he has adopted any, it is strictly in accordance with the subject, and explanatory or illustrative. In his cartoon of Pisa, the multitude of combatants on horse and foot, at a distance, mentioned by Vasari, were, no doubt, seen between the intervals of the main groupe, with the effect of which they were too small to interfere, while they accounted for and added to the energy, haste, and bustle of the whole. In the small copy at Holkham, the background figures are omitted.

In his "Holy Family," at Florence, he

has introduced a groupe of Baptists behind, which equally illustrates the subject without detracting from the importance of the principal actors.

Unmeaning and inappropriate backgrounds were too frequently adopted by the artists of that period; Correggio seems to have been the first to estimate their real value; his highly poetic fancy perceived how powerfully they might be brought in aid of the sentiment, as well as the chiaroscuro of his delightful compositions, in all of which they are happily subservient. Rubens followed in the same track, and with his usual success; but he considered this to be "one of the difficulties of the art." In his "Taking Down from the Cross," the background is entirely subordinate, and blended with the figures in a very masterly manner, like a well-adapted musical accompaniment, supporting and assisting the melody, which is, in all cases, the true desideratum.

If the background be sometimes a troublesome and dangerous companion, it is, nevertheless, capable of being rendered a

most valuable ally, for though in general it should be flat, negative, and retiring, in order to give prominence and force to the figures, it often affords the painter an opportunity of shewing his original power in the introduction of striking associations or ingenious allusions, which may add a grace and interest to the subject, explain the story, or enforce the intellectual aim of the work ; while, technically, it may be of the greatest use in giving vigour and point to some parts, softness and repose to others, union, harmony, and effect to the whole. To whatever extent background may be carried, it is indispensable that no object or circumstance be introduced which is not in perfect agreement with the character of the subject.

The chief technical resources of background are to be found in landscape architecture and drapery. Of landscape backgrounds, that of the "St. Peter Martyr," by Titian, is perhaps the finest example we can refer to. Nothing can be more grand or more happily appropriate than the mountain scenery, in which the savage massacre is

taking place; nor better managed than the union of the upper and lower parts of the composition, by means of the tall trees on the right. Here the background combines so well with the figures, that the landscape appears to be a constituent element of the subject, and not merely a contrivance to help out its picturesque effect. It may be remarked, that much of the grandeur of this justly celebrated work is owing in a great measure to the adoption of a low horizon, which makes every thing in the picture tower above the eye, while the objections which have just been stated to two of the cartoons arise chiefly from the choice which Raffaele has made of a high horizon; for the scene being out of doors, a multitude of objects must naturally occur in the large space represented beyond the figures, or it would appear an empty desert; and in "The Delivery of the Keys," none of these objects, if we except the sheep, and that only symbolically, has any thing to do with the story. The practice of giving such an elevation to the horizon, so common in the works



of the earlier artists (which perhaps arose from their studies having been made at too short a distance from the model), has the effect, as Fuseli observes, of lengthening the appearance of the feet, and throwing the figures on tiptoe ; the high horizon affords an opportunity, which may sometimes be desirable in extensive compositions, of bringing in the heads of figures on a second or third plane, appearing above those in front, as in "The Sacrifice at Lystra," for instance, and in the "St. Paul Preaching at Athens : " but an unfortunate instance of its application occurs in the "Raising of Lazarus," before mentioned, where the main action is entirely overpowered by the multitude of spectators above the principal groupe, and sunk into a hollow.

The contrary choice, probably first suggested by Lionardo's "Battle of the Standard," may be considered as much fitter for compositions of figures on a large scale, and has since been very usually adopted. I may observe, however, that it is not from Nature only that the painter may derive

materials for his backgrounds and accompaniments; the sister art of Architecture will supply him with a fund of appropriate forms, simple or rich, particularly calculated to give effect and grace to the figures, and an air of dignity to the picture; as well as often to afford opportunity for a variety of explanatory circumstances and interesting associations.

Its great value and importance is nowhere more apparent than in the "School of Athens," where it becomes a distinguishing and imposing feature of the composition, gives ample space for the collocation of so numerous an assembly, and sufficient ornament with great simplicity. Raffaello, like many of the celebrated painters of his day, was also an architect, and this fine work is invented quite in the spirit of that noble art. The symmetry of the building accords with the symmetrical arrangement of his groupes, and happily connects the whole: the unity of this grand and extensive composition could not, perhaps, have been so well effected by any other means.

The architectural background of the "Elymas" is simple and appropriate, combines agreeably with the figures, and is set off by a masterly chiaroscuro.

That of "St. Paul preaching at Athens," and "The Sacrifice of Lystra," are also good examples of subserviency, and general propriety and effect in the background. Instances of the great assistance which architecture offers to the painter are everywhere to be found, as in "The Martyrdom of St. Lawrence," and many other works of Titian and his school, in most of the pictures of Paul Veronese, and in the "St. Bavon," and other compositions of Rubens.

It may be observed, too, in many of the beautiful works of Claude, how much dignity they derive from the same source. Poussin, in his backgrounds, has carried the union of landscape and architecture to great perfection ; in his classical works, on a small scale, he may be said, with their combined aid, to have originated a novel and highly imaginative class of painting, in which he appears to me to be not only superior to all

other painters, but to display greater powers than in any other of his productions. Its very merits, however, disqualify it from vying with the superior grandeur of genuine historical art, on its true scale ; but there is so much of invention, historical or poetical propriety in these works, such a happy selection of objects natural and artificial, such consistency and character in every thing he introduces, that they are unquestionably entitled to very high consideration.

The French School have in many respects closely followed Poussin, and shewn great skill and judgment in the management of their backgrounds, in the composition of which they offer many of the best examples. Those of Sebastian Bourdon are admirable. The French have made use of flat walls and suspended draperies, which give largeness and simplicity to the general design, and set off the richer accumulation of parts in the figures, a treatment which might, perhaps, have been advantageously resorted to in the picture above me.

After these examples of its great utility,

I need scarcely point out to the student the importance of making himself acquainted with at least the general principles of architecture, as well as with the modes in which the great painters have availed themselves of its assistance. Other arts also become a kind of secondary nature to the painter, and furnish him with those materials for composition which are termed accessories, and are frequently necessary to the story. It is therefore essential that the historical painter should make himself acquainted with the civil, military, and religious costumes of different nations, at different periods, as it must occasionally be requisite to introduce various objects, dresses, and implements, for the sake of historical truth, which, in the hands of a tasteful artist, may be turned to great advantage. In the picturesque style, these accessories often become prominent features, but in proportion as the work aims at grandeur or expression, these must be few and simple.

Having now laid before you such observations as I conceive may be useful respect-

ing the inventive and scientific divisions of painting,—though I am but too well aware how much they fall short of what the subject deserves,—I must briefly advert to the imitative or practical part.

As excellence in this division of the art must obviously depend on accuracy of eye, dexterity of hand, and a wide acquaintance with the forms and effects of natural objects, which can only be obtained by diligent application and repeated experiment, it is clear that the precepts of the professor must here be of much less value than the persevering efforts of the student himself. Considering how much he has to learn, and how important it is that from his first step he should be put in the right road, his studies for some time should be conducted under the superintendence of an experienced artist, whose daily advice and example will assuredly spare him much fruitless labour, prevent his contracting bad habits, and greatly advance him in his progress. This preliminary course appears to me indispensable. The student's assiduous

endeavours will first be directed to acquire the power of making out the forms, tones, and effects, of whatever may be placed before him, with deceptive correctness, however taste and science may afterwards lead him to use or modify that power; for although, as I have shewn, deception is not the true end of painting as an art, an illusive character is its peculiar attribute and condition; without a due attention to which, however ingenious his conceptions, however great his knowledge, he can never produce a legitimate picture. Imitation in painting admits of various degrees of approximation to the exact truth, and great diversities of treatment, from the microscopic minuteness of Denner, Breughil, or Vanderzeyde, to the breadth of Titian, Vandyke, or Reynolds. A strict copy of all the complicated details of nature is evidently impossible. We cannot represent the individual hairs of the head or leaves of a tree, nor if we could, would the effect be agreeable. The reflection of Nature herself in a camera obscura will never satisfy the

eye as a picture; art requires a more decided subordination of all the parts to the whole. In proportion as his scale is diminished, the painter finds it necessary to generalize and even omit details; though in all cases some definite touches of individuality are desirable, which may be immediately recognized, and persuade us of the truth of the rest.

Mengs says justly, "all the refinement of the art consists in selecting the beautiful and the necessary, and in leaving out the superfluous and the minute." But we should remember, however, that in proportion as the work becomes refined and abstract, it will have fewer admirers; while the pleasure afforded by illusive imitation, even when employed on the most ordinary subjects, mere transcripts of still-life, will always render that property of our art the most generally attractive—all are in some degree judges of it; the cobbler, in his own line, may triumph in criticizing Apelles; and for this reason, the judicious artist, even in his loftiest flights of imagination, or highest attempts at expres-



sion, will endeavour to introduce some portion of those qualities which are intelligible and agreeable to all, as a passport for those of a more intellectual character, which will ever be confined to the few.

The painter's substitute for light being a white pigment, which can never approach to the force of light itself, it is obvious that, except under peculiar circumstances, he can, after all, produce only a modified and relative imitation of many of the appearances of nature. The round white patches, by which Claude represents the sun's disk are, in fact, merely symbols; but we recognize so much imitative truth in the sunny effect of the picture generally, that we fancy the whole to be true.

Rembrandt, in his etching of a man reading by candlelight, endeavoured to render the flame very brilliant by making it almost the only thing visible in the midst of darkness. This, of course, proved unsatisfactory; and in a second experiment, he found it necessary to give less comparative value to the flame, by spreading

more light on the surrounding objects: in a third essay, he carried this breadth still further, and very properly sacrificed the brightness of his candle to the more natural effect of the whole, imitating Nature less as she is, than as she seems to be. Here, as in Claude's "Sun," the source of light becomes a mere symbol, though we do not remark it as such, from perceiving so much truth in the greater part of the work. The imitative, therefore, like every other division of the art, has its natural limits, and is to a certain degree ideal and conventional. The particular process employed in painting will more or less affect the completeness, extent, and character of the imitation; accordingly, a great variety of methods and materials have been made use of in the operative part of our art. The early Italian masters painted in water-colours, and generally on fresh-plastered walls, *i.e.* in fresco,—a mode of proceeding which requires a number of previous studies, as well as a careful outline, traced with a hard point on the plaster. It is attended with considerable difficulty, as it

admits of no alteration ; and unless finished at once, the mortar must be removed, and that part of the work recommenced. The great purity, freshness, and durability of fresco may be seen in many very fine specimens extant in Italy ; among the most vigorous and effective of which, are those of the Caracci and Guercino, in the ceiling of the Sampieri palace at Bologna.

The introduction of oil-colours may be said to have changed the aims and character of painting, and to have rendered colouring its prime object and attribute ; and though M. Angelo considered it as a method only “fit for women or children,” it has unquestionably led to greater transparency, variety, and force,—a much closer imitation of the surfaces of things than was before attempted, but also, perhaps, to some neglect of form. Lionardo invented that rich amalgamated texture of his colour (afterwards adopted by Giorgione) called “pastoso,” combining juiciness with solidity, which Correggio pursued with so much success, and has rendered an example ever since for the best schools of

art. Some have painted on light, some on dark grounds; some with opaque colours, afterwards tinted with diaphanous tints; some have aimed at the smoothness of polished ivory, like Vanderwerf; others have heaped on colours, like Rembrandt, till, by repeated touches, they had brought out, not only the effects, but something of the texture and surface of the things represented. All these modes are deserving of attention; for the refinement and beauty of colour often depend as much on the preparation of the ground, and particular manipulation, as on the pigments employed; and I would here take the opportunity of urging the students in the painting school not to disregard the texture and execution of the specimens before them (though it may be considered a secondary merit), and especially not to load their canvass where it is thinly covered in the original, or the converse, but to make their copies as faithful as possible in all respects, or they will be wasting their time; for the chief advantage to be obtained by copying a picture, lies in

acquiring the particular process and handling, whatever they may be, of some great master, and in having this to refer to. The different modes of Titian or Correggio, of Rubens or Rembrandt, should by no means be confounded; they are all, more or less, preferable on different occasions, which the well-trained artist will be aware of, and apply them, as taste may suggest to be the most applicable to his subject. The best Italian masters endeavoured to convey the essential character, forms, and appearances of objects without minute details, or an ostentatious display of illusive imitation. The Dutch and Flemish, on the other hand, strove to attract admiration by elaborate finish and beauty of pencil.

Some have supposed that to represent Nature with fidelity, we should always have the type immediately before us; and no doubt pictures produced under that advantage are apt to possess a greater vivacity, freshness of colour, vigour of relief and execution; and may be carried further than where it has been wanting, as we see in

fine portraits from the life, which in these respects excel most historical works, even by the greatest masters. But this can never extend to all the parts of a composition, for, after all, painting is in truth an act of memory, for though the model be present, we cannot see it while putting the colour on the canvass. It is true, as the work proceeds, we may compare it with the original again and again, and its impression on the mind will be renewed, rectified, or strengthened at every look. We should therefore avail ourselves of the model whenever we can. But it is obvious, that in subjects of a higher aim, such as an Achilles or a Helen, models fit for the artist's purpose are rarely, if ever, to be found; in which case, without previous science and great caution, individual nature may put the artist out. In such emergencies, he must draw more deeply on taste and science, and make use of preparatory studies collected from whatever will assist him most; which has always been the practice of the best masters. The painter is scarcely

deserving of that name, who has not stored up in his mind, or at least in his portfolio, such memoranda of the more characteristic features of Nature, and has such a knowledge of style, as may enable him to produce considerable works without having constant recourse to a model.

Guido is said to have painted his Madonna heads from an old man. If the story be true, we must suppose that he found something in the colour or expression before him from which he took a hint, and science and taste furnished the rest. Sir J. Reynolds conceives that Guido, by this practice, meant to inculcate the expediency of constantly having Nature before our eyes; but unsuitable nature must necessarily serve to confuse or mislead, unless science be able to supply the truth of character wanting in the model.

Raffaelle, when he could not find a fit model for his "Galatea," tried to supply the want from his own conceptions of the beautiful; and though he was not eminently successful on that particular occasion, the result is probably better than it would have

been if he had painted his nymph from the Fornarina.

The Roman and Bolognese Schools felt the insufficiency of casual models in such cases, and endeavoured to rectify their defects. The Venetians, in general, were content with mere portraits, without attempting to raise them in style, even when they meant to represent historical or poetical personages. Murillo degraded the characters of Scripture still more, by making them faithful transcripts of still more vulgar models. In these, and in the ludicrous travesties of the Dutch, we cannot bring our minds to acknowledge such caricatures for the persons they assume to be. The want of that indispensable quality of art, poetical propriety, destroys the effect of their imitative truth, and leaves us mortified and disappointed with some of the finest specimens of pictorial skill. But it would be useless to dwell any longer on this part of my subject, which can only be inadequately set forth in words.

The principles of the Fine Arts exist



originally in the deep recesses of our nature; waiting for genius to discover and apply them. Many of these the great masters in painting have gradually brought to light, which having been recognized and approved, wherever they have been most investigated, become an invaluable stock of science for after-ages, and the foundation of our theories or systems.

Some have asserted that as our stock of science accumulates, our genius diminishes. I prefer the axiom of Reynolds, "that genius begins where rules end." Precepts are valuable only as they are founded on what is truly nature; as they teach the true idea or theory of our art.

Those works which have for ages maintained their reputation as *chefs d'œuvre*, must be held to have supplied us with a great portion of that real instruction, and the artist in the beginning of his career will act far more wisely in adopting the most approved rules, than in attempting to form them immediately from nature; for unless he avail himself of the science of his pre-

decessors, he can have no chance of advancing far in his art. He will endeavour to think like Raffaele, Titian, or Correggio, to imbibe their taste and feeling ; he will travel on the roads which they have opened, without servilely treading in their footsteps—and extend his researches, wherever fancy may point out an opportunity of enlarging the boundaries of the art, which will ever be the aim of true genius. There are certain fundamental rules in Nature and Art, such as variety, harmony, proportion, which must be considered to be of universal application ; others admit of relaxation, where any advantage is on the whole to be obtained. Precepts the most general must occasionally be modified or abandoned, as every subject in some respects requires an especial mode of treatment, and may be said to exist in an atmosphere of its own. Hence every succeeding work the painter may undertake should be made a new test of the principles he has collected, and where they may appear to clash, they must be accommodated to the particular demands of the subject.

It is often in the happy adjustment of such discordances that the artist best displays his taste and ingenuity, and arrives at those "nameless graces which no methods teach," those beauties of the art which may be seen and felt, but are communicable in no language but her own.

With the study of theory, I should recommend a constant reference to Nature, in whose school the student's hand, eye, and mind should never be idle. Every object or effect he sees may afford the true artist a lesson, and should be fixed as early and as strongly as possible on his memory, for many of the happiest combinations, such as are capable of suggesting his finest conceptions, may never present themselves a second time. A sketch-book, therefore, should be his inseparable companion, in which he may note down on the spot every interesting figure, groupe, action, fall of drapery, or other characteristic circumstance which may interest his fancy in his daily haunts. This practice will increase his facility of drawing, stimulate his imagination, and gradually

supply him with stores of incomparable value. It is only in thus collecting ideas fresh from the endless varieties of Nature, to be afterwards arranged on sound principles of art, that a painter can hope to produce original and striking works. This was the habit of Da Vinci and M. Angelo, of Flaxman and Stothard, and it has doubtless led to some of their most exquisite inventions and compositions. The beautiful familiar groupings which decorate the lunettes of the Sistine Chapel are evidently taken immediately from Nature, though assisted by Science, and so are probably the attitudes of the Prophets and Sibyls in the same place, as well as many of the figures in the "Last Judgment" itself. The practice needs no further recommendation or proof of its utility and importance.

In these Lectures I have been endeavouring to advocate, as my office requires, the higher styles of art, but I wish to guard myself against being thought adverse to the more familiar, when they do not descend to the vulgar and revolting. I have already

remarked, that painting, like poetry, may be allowed its range of styles, from the epic to the doggrel; and his taste must be either narrow or tyrannical, who cannot feel and allow their respective claims. Our own school has produced examples of very various kinds, which in many of their best qualities, have scarcely ever been surpassed, and such as it would be a reproach not to admire. Whatever is carried nearly as far as its peculiar properties will admit of, is entitled to its share of praise—the artist has accomplished his purpose; and great excellence in an inferior style may be preferable to mediocrity in a higher. Yet ours would ill deserve the appellation of a refined and elegant art, if it were generally occupied on low and trivial subjects; and an exclusive fondness for such must lead to its degradation. The legitimate object of all academies, and their chief utility, I conceive, is to foster and promote its highest aims, and to secure its true principles (as they have been deduced from the acknowledged master-works of all times and countries) against the

fluctuations or temporary invasions of fashion, caprice, or neglect, and preserve them as in an ark for a more propitious era.

The history of painting has been so amply and ably treated by those who have preceded me in this chair, that I think it unnecessary to enter into any detailed relation of what is known or supposed of its rise and progress. Fuseli has brought before the student every thing curious or important respecting ancient art that his learning and industry could glean from the scanty and often improbable accounts that remain, and has referred to all the classic writers who may be consulted on the subject with any advantage. My observations on this head will therefore be very brief, and chiefly introductory to some comments on its present condition and prospects in this country.

Attempts in painting, more or less rude, indigenous or transplanted, have been found wherever civilization has begun to shew itself; the first seeds of the art may, perhaps, originate spontaneously in all countries

from man's instinctive and general love of imitation. Accidental appearances in nature, such as stains upon rocks, impressions of forms in the sand, the shapes of clouds, or shadows of objects on the ground, may in various places have been sufficient to excite his fancy, and furnish him with hints for his first rude efforts. The earliest pictures mentioned on good authority are perhaps those of the Canaanites, which Moses was commanded to destroy three hundred years before the Trojan war; though there are remains of painting and sculpture in Egypt, which, if the learned are right in their conjectures, were produced within two or three centuries after the flood, and probably some of those in the British Museum are nearly as ancient. Some painted vases, found a few years since in the tombs of Etruscan cities in Italy, known to have been in ruins before the foundation of Rome, evince a considerable progress in style and composition. But Greece seems to have been the soil pre-eminently suited to the development

of the fine arts, and in that favoured country they attained a degree of perfection unknown before or since.

Here we may pause for an instant to look back upon the palmy state of our art. The few specimens of ancient painting which remain are almost confined to the decorations of some of the houses of Pompeii and Herculaneum, and of a few Roman tombs, probably works of the Greek School, many of which possess great elegance of design and purity of colour; and if we consider them as the works of provincial decorative artists, would dispose us to give full credit to what is related of Apelles, Zeuxis, and Parrhasius. But exclusively of these, and the vivid descriptions which the writers of antiquity have given of their great works in painting, from the age of Pericles to that of Alexander and Augustus, the admirable productions of their sculpture, still preserved, leave no reasonable doubt that the Greeks equally excelled in the sister art. It is evident that their painters paid a similar attention to style in forms, and successfully



cultivated beauty of tone and colour. With these, their powers of invention, composition, and expression, were doubtless commensurate; and although they do not appear to have had a decided perception of some of those imposing qualities which give relish and effect to modern painting, various anecdotes prove that they successfully cultivated illusive imitation, and spared no pains in the completion of their pictures. From the philosophical acuteness with which the Greeks investigated the causes and principles of every subject that came before them, it is deeply to be regretted that none of their treatises on art have reached us. They would probably have thrown much light upon the subject. It would assuredly have been highly gratifying and instructive to have compared the opinions and doctrines of Pamphilus, Apollodorus, and Apelles, with those of Da Vinci, Reynolds, and Fuseli.

Painting was held by the Greeks in much higher estimation than it has been by any nation since, and was publicly proclaimed by Alexander to be the chief of the liberal

arts. Employed as the ally of religion and government, to commemorate heroic examples, and promote patriotic feeling, its productions, like those of Sculpture, which it generally accompanied, were regarded by that tasteful and sensitive people with enthusiastic delight, and considered above all price. The great artist was looked upon as the property of his country, and one of its chief ornaments; and he shewed himself entitled to its affection and veneration by the great moral and social benefits he conferred upon it in return; sharing with its statesmen and philosophers in the cultivation of his fellow-citizens. Unhappily, Art continued at this elevation for too short a period, and gradually began to sink when the dominion of the world passed into the hands of the Romans.

The comparative incompetency or indifference of that people for such refined objects, even at the Augustine era, is admitted in the well-known disclaimer of Virgil; and though Pliny speaks of painting as having been "early honoured among the Romans,"

in telling us, that it was "once a noble art sought after by kings and nations," he sufficiently shews that it had ceased to be so considered even in his time. I shall not pursue Art to its decline and utter degradation, but hasten to its revival in the Italian states towards the middle of the thirteenth century, when, after a sleep of ages, Painting once more awoke, and again began to challenge admiration. At that period of renovation, the human mind seemed at once to expand, the lights of genius began to appear in every direction, and the whole circle of the liberal arts rose together like a beautiful constellation to shed sweet influence on social life. About the close of the fifteenth century, and during the interesting Cinque Cento, Lionardo, M. Angelo, Raffaello, Titian, Correggio, shone out with a splendour perhaps equal to that of the greatest painters of antiquity, and produced such powerful works in their different styles of excellence, as would have done honour to the ancient world in its most fortunate periods. The princes and people of Italy seem to have

welcomed the productions and fostered the talents of these surprising men with delight and affection, and to have assisted with fervour in developing their energies, as if anxious to share in their glories. They employed the arts, as in earlier times, to illustrate religion, adorn the temples and public buildings, perpetuate great events, and stimulate patriotic feeling. We find the efforts of Painting at this period directed chiefly to elevated subjects: scriptural and profane history, poetry, or the portraits of those great public characters whose actions and talents entitle them to be transmitted to posterity by the pencil of the artist, as well as by the pen of the historian.

Having already brought before the student the characteristic excellences of the fathers of modern painting, I will not here enlarge upon them, but I may notice one fact which seems deserving of remark.

Such was the force of genius, and of a noble ambition in these great men, that they aimed at possessing all the liberal arts in conjunction,—painting, sculpture, architec-

ture, poetry, and music ; while in our degenerate days we seem to have become persuaded, not merely that "one science only will one genius fit," but that painting alone is an art too complicated to be possessed in all its parts by any individual ; and that, whatever his faculties, the extent of his hopes must be to distinguish himself in some one particular division of it, as design, colour, or chiaroscuro.

One feels reluctant, however, to receive as a sound conclusion, an opinion so degrading, as it would appear, to the talents of the present age. Painting in those days was still young ; much was to be sought out, and it should have appeared a more difficult art then than now, when we have our great predecessors to guide us, and more leisure to arrange and classify, refine and extend, what they had accumulated or projected ; and this was the aim of the celebrated school of the Caracci, which half a century later was established at Bologna. They thought that to carry on, and complete the art, it was but necessary to unite all the different

excellences of which it had shewn itself capable in the works of the most admired painters, and to avoid their faults. No man had hitherto been master of all the parts of painting in an equal degree of perfection. M. Angelo excelled in composition and drawing, but not in colour. Raffaëlle was distinguished for expression and grace, but had neither the greatness of style of his rival, nor the sweetness and union of Correggio; and Titian, a perfect colourist, was deficient in form. The theory of the Bolognese appears to point out the only way in which Painting can have a prospect of advancing. Fuseli, however, seems to treat their project with some degree of ridicule; and as his opinion has met with opposition, or has not been understood, I shall digress a little to inquire into his true meaning, which may afford an opportunity of offering some further hints to the student. The question I think should be, whether or not, on this eclectic principle, Painting is likely to acquire an increase of power over the mind or affections, which

should be the great aim of Painting, and whether the qualities which the Caracci were anxious to combine, do not belong to distinct classes, and are not incapable of a closer union without suffering respectively. A very little experience is sufficient to shew that many qualities, in themselves desirable, may be incapable of coalescing, and that what forms the principal charm of one picture may become a blemish in another. The brilliant colour of Paolo Veronese, as I before suggested, so far from assisting the Cartoons, would undoubtedly strip them of all sentiment; and even the more subdued hues and imitative truth of Titian would as certainly injure, rather than improve, "The Last Judgment." Colour could never form any part of its attraction; in works of so elevated an aim, it may be sufficient that the sense is not offended; the graces of the art would be impertinent in what is meant to be sublime. But let us advert to that distinguished eclectic, Rubens, by whom the principle of the Caracci has been carried further than by any other

painter. With extraordinary natural gifts, this great artist had pursued his studies upon the widest scale, and we find him early endeavouring to combine, in one splendid system, all that he had found admirable in Lionardo and M. Angelo, in Titian and Correggio, whom he may be said to have rivalled in their different excellences. But have those energetic compositions of "The Fallen Angels," and others of the same class at Munich, which have been so justly held up to admiration for their marvellous powers, surpassed "The Last Judgment" in sublimity or pathos? Who is tempted to believe that the latter could have gained any assistance from the florid tints of Rubens, or does not at once see that the sublime repudiates such an alliance? I say nothing of the inferiority of these works in style of design, for this great mannerist, though he could expatiate on the beauty of the antique, seems to have felt that its simplicity and refinement would never accord with that daring exuberance in which he is always consistent, and is himself alone. Nor



could he have amalgamated his own artificial style with the pure feeling and affecting expressions of Raffaëlle; and he knew it too well ever to make the attempt. They are obviously "spirits of another sort," and their spheres widely distinct.

It cannot be denied that Rubens has displayed a more comprehensive union of technical powers and a more picturesque genius than any other painter; but he has not advanced on the colour of Titian or the charm of Correggio, or raised the art by any invention of his own; by combining the merits of others in a high degree, he has somewhat enlarged the boundaries of Painting, and seems to have fairly experimented the eclectic system, but he has not placed himself at the head of the art.

The qualities we admire in the finest works are always relative, and must be measured out in due proportion; by attempting to make them all equally important, we weaken the effect of each. Thus it has been observed, that the immense fabric of St. Peter's at Rome appears at

first sight neither lofty, nor wide, nor long ; the proportions are so justly balanced, it is said, that you are not struck with its vastness till you begin to compare its parts with the objects around you. But has not the architect sacrificed character to this supposed accuracy (which might have been beautiful in a smaller building) ; and has he not employed enormous means to produce an ordinary and inadequate effect ? On the contrary, have not the authors of many of our Gothic cathedrals shewn more skill and judgment, who, by adopting bolder proportions, have produced grander effects on a much smaller scale of real magnitude and at much less cost ? Character, which is the soul of art, can hardly be obtained without lowering the value of some things in order to give greater importance to others. Some predominant principle will always be more striking and effective than an uniformity of qualities, however desirable in themselves. This, I apprehend, was the lesson Fuseli meant to convey. That able critic could not wish to deter the student from en-

deavouring to acquire, in the utmost perfection, all parts of the art, because they cannot always be combined in equal degrees, for no one appreciated more than himself the value of those extensive acquisitions which afforded so broad and solid a basis to the art of our great leaders. He could not intend to object to the consistent assemblage of great qualities to be found in "The Transfiguration" of Raffaello, nor to the mode in which that admirable artist aimed at carrying on his studies, uniting in just proportion all the excellences compatible with his subject. In that great work, according to Mengs, "Raffaello exhibited a new degree of perfection, and opened the true road to Art;" but I may add, that he was still advancing in the same direction, and subordinating every thing to expression.

To return to history. If the Caracci school did not much extend the boundaries of the art, or add to its power (unless we except in the twilight sobriety of tone of Lodovico), it produced a number of very considerable painters, whose names I need

not enumerate. The times, however, grew unfavourable to the further progress of Fine Art.

The popes, and other princes of Italy, became less able, or less willing, to adorn churches and palaces with extensive works, and Painting, instead of rising, gradually descended from its height and accommodated itself to the less elevated taste of wealthy individuals, who became its patrons in the great commercial cities of Europe. Rome, Florence, and Bologna, however, long produced works of a high class, and sank with dignity; while at Venice, colour soon became the paramount, or rather only, attraction; and technical bravura began everywhere to be accepted as a substitute for mind.

In Germany, Flanders, and Holland, colour, chiaroscuro, and finish were easily acquired; and, aided by the fascinations of oil-painting (which had reappeared at Bruges), were soon found sufficient to attract admiration, though employed on the coarsest and most homely subjects,

till at length Painting condescended to luxuriate in transcripts of dunghills and beggars, or the revels of drunken boors, which from their great truth, and beauty of execution, and effect, found their way into all the collections of Europe.

Louis Quatorze was the first among her princes to perceive this degraded state into which the art had fallen, and endeavoured to restore it to its former elevation. He ordered the "Magôts" of Teniers to be removed from the royal cabinet, and employed the talents of his countrymen on worthier themes. He founded at Paris an academy of arts on a magnificent scale, with an auxiliary establishment at Rome, equally splendid, to which a number of those students who had gained prizes in the parent school were annually drafted off to complete their education among the great works of antiquity and of the Cinque Cento. To these artists, on their return to Paris, further encouragement and patronage were immediately afforded, to embark them honourably in the exercise of their profession.

On the many distinguished painters which France has reared by these judicious means, I will not here dilate ; the names of Poussin, Le Sueur, Le Brun, and many others, will ever do credit to the French School, and furnish valuable examples to the world.

Paris and Rome have long been considered the two great universities of Art, to which students from all parts constantly resort. The other sovereigns of Europe have since perceived the value of such institutions, and have gradually adopted them in their respective dominions. At this time scarcely a principality is to be found on the continent that has not its academy of arts, supported by the government with liberality and effect. But let us now glance at the history of painting in this country, which presents so strange a contrast to what I have just stated. Zuccherro and More, Holbein and Vandyke, Lely and Kneller, helped to introduce the art of portraiture into England, and found it a congenial soil. We know with what success it has since been cultivated : the names of

Reynolds and Lawrence may rank with the most eminent in this class, of whatever place or period. In the highest styles of art, we have been less fortunate; and various causes have combined to prevent the naturalization among us of what is generally included under the name of historical painting. Rubens had been employed to adorn the banqueting-house at Whitehall, and in other great works, and in the display of his wonderful powers, had shewn what are the capabilities of the art. In more propitious times the ill-fated Charles (whose taste far exceeded that of any sovereign who had previously filled the English throne) might have drawn forth the talents of the nation in this direction.

Guerrio, Laguerre, and other foreign *macchinisti*, subsequently came over to ornament the houses of the nobility with extensive compositions; and their technical powers were considerable. These works, being on a large scale, and affording considerable scope to the imagination, kept alive in some degree the higher qualities of

the art, as it rendered necessary a competent study of the human figure, as well as of invention, composition, and technical science. Kent and Sir James Thornhill seem to have been the only native artists of any eminence employed in this way. The latter produced many respectable works at Greenwich and elsewhere (the copies of the Cartoons around us are by his hand); but this style of decoration soon went out of fashion, and from the reign of Queen Anne to the accession of George III., Painting was sinking into the lowest state of neglect, and scarcely produced a single historical effort worthy of record.

Brighter prospects dawned upon Art with the commencement of the reign of George III., whose name will descend to posterity as that of the first British monarch whose paternal care was extended to the Fine Arts. At the request of the principal artists of that period, he adopted them under his protection, and founded the Royal Academy for the cultivation of painting, sculpture, and architecture,—allotted them apartments in his palace of Somerset House,



for carrying on the schools, and, while it was necessary, assisted the society from his privy purse. He took Mr. West, then just returned from his studies on the continent, under his immediate patronage, allowed him a liberal salary, and employed him to paint an extensive series of historical pictures on a princely scale. It was hoped that this illustrious example, and many of the fine works it gave rise to, would have had a favourable influence on the public taste; but the sovereign and the artists were equally doomed to be disappointed in the result. Another attempt was made, some years since, by several noblemen and gentlemen, to revive and foster historical painting in the establishment of the British Institution, in support of which they raised a considerable subscription; but their laudable endeavours have not hitherto been attended with the success they so well deserved.

It was at the request of these lovers of art, and real patriots, that a plan was drawn up by a highly-distinguished member of this academy, which, had it met with the en-

couragement of the government, to whom it was submitted, must have given a great impulse to the higher styles of painting, and by this time have produced a number of original works which would have done honour to the country, and amply repaid in its consequences the trivial sum that would have been annually requisite to carry it into effect. But, like all attempts that have hitherto been made in favour of this class of art in England, it proved abortive, and we still remain the only civilized country in Europe that affords no public demand for the great works of Painting. How are we to account for this repugnance in the English nation to a species of art which elsewhere has always been considered one of the most indubitable marks of a highly refined state of the public mind? It cannot be said that the artists have been wanting to themselves or their country in the efforts they have made to assert the noble powers of British art, and to promote the favourable reception of historical painting. Above seventy years ago, some of the

principal artists of that time united in presenting to the Foundling Hospital (then recently opened) a series of Scriptural pictures. Soon after, Reynolds, West, Dance, and others, made an offer of decorating St. Paul's Cathedral at their own expense, but the offer was declined. Barry, with a noble enthusiasm, undertook, and carried into execution, the decoration of the great room of the Adelphi, on being provided only with canvass, colours, and models. In fine, this academy has, for above half a century, supported, from its own resources, a national school—the only one of its kind—for the gratuitous instruction of young artists; and if its success has not been complete, it is some consolation to reflect that, under every disadvantage, Art has, in many styles, made a more rapid progress in England than it ever did in any other country in the same period of time. Great works are not produced, because great works are not wanted: hence design, the true basis of graphic art, ceases to be studied as it deserves, and the deficiency is felt in every branch of it,

down to the patterns of our manufacturers. Considering the present unfriendly feeling towards historical art, the student may be disposed to ask, what is to tempt him to enter upon a long and laborious career, which affords so little prospect of encouragement, when patronage and reputation are to be obtained more easily in humbler walks? In reply to this, the best hope I can suggest is in the recent establishment of our National Gallery, which, viewed as the first recognition on the part of our government, that the art of painting is deserving the consideration of the country, may be welcomed as a favourable omen; and if the works of the living are not yet thought worthy of being placed side by side with those of the dead, as in other countries, it surely cannot long remain unperceived that the only mode of stimulating modern art to rival that of former days, would be the gradual and select admission of the best specimens to be obtained at the time present from our own living countrymen, and not to wait for perfection. Were this

adopted, it would infallibly rouse the talents of the country, and, if conducted under judicious and impartial regulation, would render it indeed a National Gallery, and soon redeem our national credit.

To excel in art, a portion of enthusiasm is essential, and this cannot be excited by trivial causes. The being appointed to decorate a Capella Sistina and a Vatican, brought to light the energies, before unknown, of Michael Angelo and Raffaello, for the admiration of their own age and of posterity. Works intended to remain as national monuments, on a really grand scale, will ever awaken considerable powers, and stimulate genius to its utmost exertions.

“ Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise  
To scorn delights and live laborious days ; ”

and such noble aspirations would again be called forth by great occasions, and be attended with commensurate results; would lead to the general dissemination of taste, and the gradual formation of a great school. No commercial speculations nor art-unions

can supply its place. Without public patronage, painting can never arrive at any great eminence. Such encouragement as is wanting here, is now going on to a very considerable extent in France, Bavaria, and Prussia. A number of large pictures are annually purchased for the public collections of Paris, and the historical gallery, recently formed on a more extensive scale and devoted to the military glory of the nation, has already placed art on a higher elevation there than it occupies any where else. The public works now going on in the small town of Munich, in the decoration of churches, palaces, and public buildings, is truly surprising, and among which there are productions of very marked excellence in the epic style ; but any detail of this would contrast too painfully with the neglected condition of painting here : a gleam of hope, it is true, has just broke forth in the establishment of a commission to consider if the new houses of Parliament in progress may not afford an opportunity for promoting the arts ; and no doubt every lover of art

will wish success to their deliberations and their efforts to retrieve the national reputation of the country.

In the absence of sufficient inducement, much effort cannot be looked for, yet I would fain believe that some among us may always be found who will love the art, as they love virtue, for its own sake, and will support to the utmost its intellectual and moral character and credit. I am aware that none but strong and well-regulated minds will be able to bear up long against the neglect, not to say hostility, which classical painting has hitherto been fated to encounter in this country. But high art was never mercenary. No great works of invention ever were or will be produced from sordid or mercenary motives. They require the artist to be influenced by other and better feelings; a fondness for his vocation, a sense of its capabilities and worth, a wish to be useful in his generation, must be his main incentives. "The art has fallen on evil days and evil tongues," yet let the student hold right onward, "nor bate one jot of heart or

hope." Let him proceed in the noble and determined spirit of Milton. Let him by industry and study endeavour to qualify himself for great undertakings, and be ready when called upon by happier circumstances, to sustain the honours of his art, and perhaps help to add to the other glories of England, that of a distinguished school of Historical Painting.





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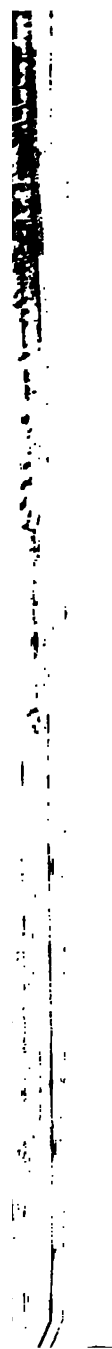
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FINIS.





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